UNDERSTANDING RELIGION

10

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About the Author

At the time of publication, Peta Goldburg was a leading educator in the field of Religion and Professor of Religious Education at Australian Catholic University. Peta has played a significant role in curriculum development for the teaching of religion for the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority as a writer for the syllabus for Study of Religion in 2000, 2008 and 2016. She has extensive teaching experience at primary, secondary and tertiary levels and regularly presents professional development programs to teachers across Australia and internationally.

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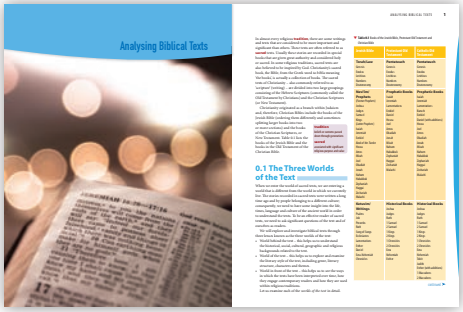
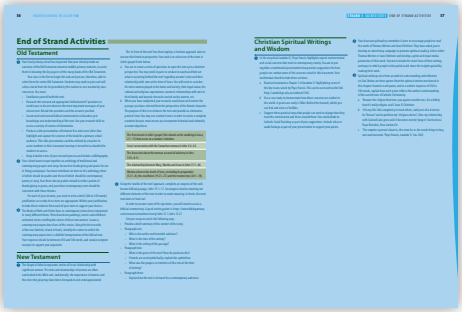
Analysing Biblical Text – the preliminary chapter provides valuable background information for the analysis of biblical texts, giving the writings a context for the contemporary reader.



Chapter activities – interactive activities reinforce learning and bring the text to life in a practical and engaging way.

Glossary terms – these are bolded in the text, defined in the margins and collated at the end of the textbook for easy reference.

The book is split into the four strands of the Religion curriculum: Sacred Texts, Beliefs, Church and Christian Life.



End of Strand Activities – interactive activities highlight key areas explored in each strand and help reinforce learning.

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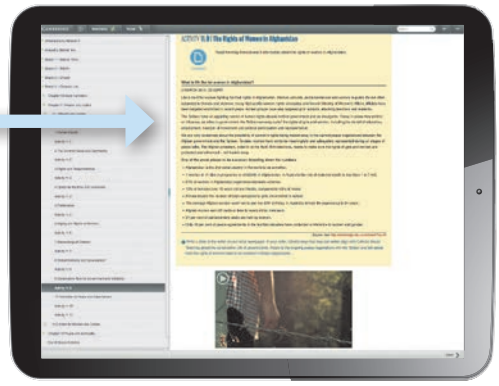

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Analysing Biblical Texts

JEREMIAH 16:20—17:16
distress,[a] to you the nations
themselves will come from the
ends of the earth,[b] and they
will say: "Indeed our forefa-
thers came to possess sheer
falsehood,[c] vanity and things in
which there was nothing bene-
ficial."[d] 20 Can earthling man
make for himself gods when
they are no gods?[e]
21 "Therefore here I am
causing them to know; at this
one time I shall cause them to
know my hand and my might,
17

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In almost every religious **tradition**, there are some writings and texts that are considered to be more important and significant than others. These texts are often referred to as **sacred** texts. Usually these stories are recorded in special books that are given great authority and considered holy or sacred. In some religious traditions, sacred texts are also believed to be inspired by God. Christianity's sacred book, the Bible, from the Greek word *ta biblia* meaning 'the books', is actually a collection of books. The sacred texts of Christianity – also commonly referred to as 'scripture' (writing) – are divided into two large groupings consisting of the Hebrew Scriptures (commonly called the Old Testament by Christians) and the Christian Scriptures (or New Testament).

Christianity originated as a branch within Judaism and, therefore, Christian Bibles include the books of the Jewish Bible (ordering them differently and sometimes splitting larger books into two or more sections) and the books of the Christian Scriptures, or New Testament. Table 0.1 lists the books of the Jewish Bible and the books in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible.

tradition
beliefs or customs passed down through generations

sacred
associated with significant religious purpose and value

0.1 The Three Worlds of the Text

When we enter the world of sacred texts, we are entering a world that is different from the world in which we currently live. The stories recorded in sacred texts were written a long time ago and by people belonging to a different culture; consequently, we need to have some insight into the life, times, language and culture of the ancient world in order to understand the texts. To be an effective reader of sacred texts, we need to ask significant questions of the text and of ourselves as readers.

We will explore and investigate biblical texts through three lenses known as the three worlds of the text:

- World behind the text – this helps us to understand the historical, social, cultural, geographic and religious backgrounds related to the text.
- World of the text – this helps us to explore and examine the literary style of the text, including genre, literary structure, characters and themes.
- World in front of the text – this helps us to see the ways in which the texts have been interpreted over time, how they engage contemporary readers and how they are used within religious traditions.

Let us examine each of the *worlds of the text* in detail.

▼ **Table 0.1** Books of the Jewish Bible, Protestant Old Testament and Christian Bible

Jewish Bible	Protestant Old Testament	Catholic Old Testament
Torah/Law Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	**Pentateuch** Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	**Pentateuch** Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy
Nevi'im/ Prophets (*Former Prophets*) Joshua Judges Samuel Kings (*Latter Prophets*) Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel *Book of the Twelve* Hosea Amos Micah Joel Obadiah Jonah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	**Prophetic Books** Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	**Prophetic Books** Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Baruch Ezekiel Daniel (with additions) Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi
Ketuvim/ Writings Psalms Job Proverbs Ruth Song of Songs Ecclesiastes Lamentations Esther Daniel Ezra-Nehemiah Chronicles	**Historical Books** Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	**Historical Books** Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Tobit Judith Esther (with additions) 1 Maccabees 2 Maccabees

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Jewish Bible	Protestant Old Testament	Catholic Old Testament
	Poetic and Wisdom Books Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs	**Poetic and Wisdom Books** Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs Wisdom of Solomon Ecclesiastes

▲ **Figure 0.1** A Christian Bible

0.2 The World Behind the Text

The world behind the text refers to the world in which the text was created. A study of the world behind the text requires locating information related to the social, historical, geographical, cultural and religious world in which the text was created. It also means trying to identify, if possible, the author, where and when the text was created, what language was used for the original text, as well as the audience to whom the text was addressed.

Gentile
a person of non-Jewish faith or ancestry

laity
members of a religious faith who are not ordained clergy

When and Where?

Often it is easy to identify the time in which the text was written, so the social, cultural, historical and religious world of the text provide us with insights into the world behind the text. It is important to ask questions of the text, such as:

- In what historical time was the text written? What was happening at this time in history? Were the people concerned prosperous, living under foreign occupation or in exile?
- Where does the story/action take place? (If a town, region or country is named, locate it on a map so that you know where in the ancient world it is located.)
- When does it take place (including what was happening at this time in history for the people involved in the text)?
- How did society operate at that time in history? What was the relationship between men, women, slaves, priests, etc.?
- What customs, beliefs and values were common at the time?

Who?

For biblical texts, trying to identify the author of the text can be difficult: it may involve trying to identify if the author was male or female; Jew or **Gentile**; slave or free; peasant or middle class; priest or **laity**. If we are able to identify the author, we can read and see the text in a new light. Unfortunately, there is little information in the biblical text that reveals who the authors were, and so we may need to look at other information in the world behind the text to assist us with reading.

How?

Because many sacred texts are written in languages other than English, it is important to have some understanding of what words, expressions or images meant at that time in history, so language is another significant area in the world behind the text. In exploring the language of an ancient text, we need to know what certain words mean, how grammar worked and what expressions or figures of speech meant. Sometimes, other writings of the same time period can also assist us in our investigations.

To Whom?

It is also helpful if we can locate some information about the original intended audience – the people to whom the text was addressed. Was the text written for a certain group of Jews? Or was it written for Gentiles? What was the audience's situation? It is important for us to locate this type of information because otherwise we might be tempted to impose our own meaning on the text. Words and meanings of words change over time and context is important – we need to understand the context of the time in which the text emerged so that we can better understand how to read the text today in a different context.

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Customs

Knowing something about the customs of the time can also provide important insights into ancient texts. The following questions may assist your investigations:

- What religious or social customs need to be explored to aid understanding of the story?
- What social groups are represented in the story?
- Are women mentioned? Why are women not mentioned in the story? What is said about women?

The following questions may also assist you to uncover information related to the world behind the text:

- Who and what are talked about in the text?
- What historical situation is being described?
- In which historical situation was the author writing?
- What concerns was the author addressing in his/her own time?
- Are there special emphases of the author that colour the work?
- What may have happened in the development and transmission of the text? Does it address more than one later situation?

▲ **Figure 0.2** Reading an ancient religious text

ACTIVITY 0.1

For the following activities, you will need to read Mark 7:5–15.

1. Who are the individuals or groups mentioned in this text?
2. Copy the table below and use it to record the two groups. Use the following link – http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7416 – and read the article to complete the information required for the table regarding their role in society and their central beliefs.

Group	What did they do and what did they believe?

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 0.1 continued

3 Your research in Question 2 can help you to better interpret this text. Based on your research, why might the two groups mentioned in the text have responded to Jesus in the way they do in Mark 7:5–15?

4 Jesus' behaviour in the text is being questioned. Why might his behaviour here be seen as controversial? (You may have to look into purity laws and customs in order to properly answer this question.)

5 Using two works of popular fiction or film – Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Craig Silvey's *Jasper Jones* – copy and complete the table below to explore the significance of the world behind the text and its impact on meaning-making.

6 When the table is complete, identify some of the key similarities and differences between the two texts. What conclusions can you draw about the significance of the original context of the works on their audience?

Questions/Texts	*To Kill a Mockingbird*	*Jasper Jones*
a When was the text written and published? What were some of the significant social, political and racial issues that were prominent at the time of the author's writing?		
b When was the text set? Is the setting the same as the time it was written or has the author chosen a different historical time? Why do you think so, and what is the significance of this?		
c Where is the story set? Can you locate the place on a map?		
d What was the role and status of women at the time of the novel? What political and social rights did they have? How did these compare with men?		
e What was the dominant cultural belief about race? How does this manifest in the story?		
f Who is the narrator of the story? What perspectives do they bring and what insights do these provide the audience?		
g Can you identify any expressions, cultural references or colloquial language that are specific to the time or context? What insights do these provide the audience?		
h Who is the intended audience of the original novels and the films? What conclusions can you draw about the authors' intention and the audience's situation?		

7 Exploring the world behind a sacred text can be more complex and involve significant research, because the customs and traditions, politics and social norms can be quite different from our own.

Read Matthew 2:1–15 and copy and complete the questions in the table below.

Questions	Responses
a This writing is attributed to Matthew. Who is this author and when was this likely to have been written?	
b What language did the author write in and who was his audience? What evidence can you find in the text to support your answer?	
c There are several geographic and historic references in this passage. Identify who and where they are and find out their significance.	

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY **0.1** continued

Questions	Responses
d What was the author's main intent in including this information? Note that it does not appear in any of the other gospels.	
e What is the significance of a great star? Why would this have been important to the ancient people?	
f What do we know about the wise men from the East? Where are they likely to have journeyed from and why might they be considered wise?	

0.3 The World of the Text

The world of the text focuses on the characteristics of the text that assist the reader to find meaning.

Genre

Biblical texts can be studied and analysed just like any other text, so one of the first things it is important to find out is the genre of the text: for example, is the text a poem, a speech, a wise saying, a narrative, a list, a genealogy, a parable or a letter? Identifying the genre of a text is important because once we know the genre, we read the text very differently. We know that when we read and understand poetry it is very different from reading a science book or reading directions to make a cake. Some questions to consider include:

- What is the genre?
- What function did the genre serve in the original ancient life setting?
- What was its purpose or intention?
- What function does it serve in the final form of the biblical text?
- Why did the author use this particular form?

Characters

If the text is a narrative, we need to know who the protagonist or hero is and who the antagonist or villain might be. It is also helpful to look for clues in the text that might enable us to evaluate each character. Character analysis is an important element in the world of the text.

The following questions will assist you with character analysis.

- Who is in the story?
- How are they described, and by whom?
- What emotions do they reveal?
- Who is the main character?
- Who initiates the action?
- Which characters interact with one another?

Narrator

The narrator is the person telling the story. An author often creates a narrator and the story is told from the narrator's point of view. It is helpful to try to separate when the narrator is narrating the story and when the narrator is speaking directly to the reader.

In any text, the narrator plays a very important role. Through language choices, the narrator can position readers to think and feel a certain way about characters and plot points.

Plot

The plot of a story is the events that make up the story. How these events are linked to each other and what order they occur in the story are integral to how the plot is shaped.

The following questions will assist in unpacking the world of the text.

Structure

- Are there any patterns or parallels in the story?
- Is there any repetition of words, phrases or questions?
- What is the significance of these words, phrases and questions?
- Is there a parallel of this story in another section of scripture?

Speech

- Who speaks in the story?
- What is said?

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- Why is it said?
- Who initiates the speech?
- What is the form/genre of the speech?
- What titles are used?

Positioning

As part of the world of the text, we also need to examine how the material is arranged and what might have been left out.

Authors 'position' readers. In other words, the author attempts to shape the readers' point of view or perspective. Authors shape texts by using a range of techniques that are designed to encourage readers to support the writer's ideas, attitudes and values and, ultimately, to engage sympathetically or unsympathetically with characters in the story. Authors use a variety of techniques to position readers. Some of these techniques include:

- dialogue – how characters speak and interact influences the reader
- figurative speech – includes the type of imagery used by the author as well as the way scenes are described
- narrative structure – may be constructed in a variety of ways: it may be linear, that is, in chronological order; it might be fragmented or have flashbacks; it might start in the middle of the action; or it could involve dreams or multiple points of view
- style – is related to how language is used: what words are chosen, and how the sentences are constructed to engage the reader in the action, setting and characters
- symbolism – often used in biblical texts, and so the use of symbols can also position readers because of an association of meaning.

Readers are also positioned by their own background and circumstances. This element of reader positioning falls into the category of the world in front of the text.

Figure 0.3 Artist's impression of Jesus teaching the disciples

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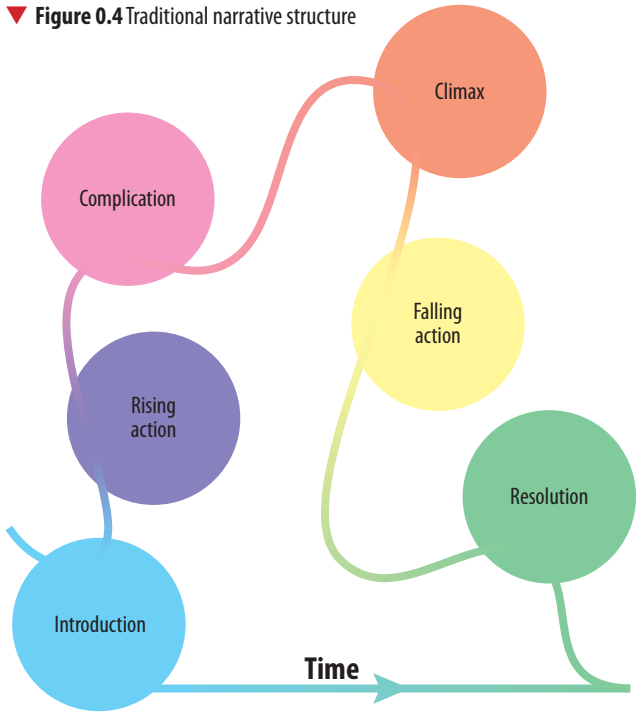
Structure of a Narrative

Most narratives follow a similar structure. Figure 0.4 shows how a narrative progresses.



▼ **Figure 0.4** Traditional narrative structure

Context

When studying ancient texts, context is important. Context includes all elements – social, cultural, political, historical and economic – that surround an event. If we know more about the context, we will have a deeper understanding of the text. Understanding the context involves investigating and researching information. Some questions that will assist us to have a better knowledge of the context of a text include:

- Where is the story located within the Bible? Is it in the Old Testament or the New Testament?
- How does this passage answer questions previously raised in other sections of the Bible?
- How do the characters use language to their advantage?
- What is its relationship to the passages immediately preceding and following it?
- If the text is from the Christian Scriptures, how is it related to the Hebrew Scriptures?

ACTIVITY 0.2

1. Read Mark 2:1–12. Familiarise yourself with the elements of narrative discussed above, and record evidence of each one from the story by copying and completing the table below.

Narrative element	Evidence
Introduction	
Rising action	
Complication	
Climax	
Falling action	
Resolution	

2. Parables contain specific literary elements in order to better convey the message within the story. Specifically, they contain the elements of contrast, repetition, the 'rule of three' (that is, something that occurs or appears three times) and emphasis on the end of the story (an important message).

   Read one of the most widely known parables, the Good Samaritan, in Luke 10:25–37, and copy and complete the table below by identifying each of the literary elements.

Literary element	Evidence
Contrast	
Repetition	
Rule of three	
End stress	

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 0.2 continued

3 How does analysing a text, as you did in Questions 1 and 2, help you to better discern the meaning or message within the text?
4 Consider Matthew 2:1–15 and answer the following questions by copying and completing the table below:

Questions	Responses
In this narrative, who is the protagonist or hero and who is the antagonist or villain?	
List all the characters in the story. Who initiates the action? Who responds?	
Which characters interact with one another? Who is passive?	
Consider the order of events that contribute to the plot. List what happens and in what order.	
Is the narrator an eyewitness? What is the narrator's role and how do they position the audience to have sympathy or disdain for certain characters and situations? Give evidence.	
Read the sections of Matthew that come immediately prior to and after this section of text. What does it add to your understanding of the story?	
What are the references to the Hebrew Scriptures? Locate the original passages and explain how such references enrich the text you have read.	

0.4 The World in Front of the Text

In the past, the world in front of the text was only explained in homilies, sermons and spiritual readings. More recently, the world in front of the text has also focused on the reader, on how and where certain biblical texts are used, and how they are interpreted in the contemporary world. On its own, the text is nothing without the reader – the reader comes to the text and responds to the text.

Modern readers are different from ancient readers. As modern readers, we bring more than 2000 years of Christian reflection, interpretation and meaning to the text. A contemporary Christian reader, reading the prophets from the Old Testament, brings to the text centuries of Christian reflection on the prophetic message of the Old Testament, and their interpretation is influenced and filtered through the Christian belief in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is important to remember that what we read into a text may not be what the author of an ancient text intended.

The world in front of the text reminds us that we need to identify and acknowledge what it is that, as readers, we bring to the texts – we do not come as neutral or value-free people, we come with a certain set of beliefs and understandings that have been developed and shaped within a context of the contemporary world. So the effort to find meaning in the world in front of the text begins with the worldview of the contemporary reader.

Feminist biblical scholars, for example, bring their experience of being a woman to the biblical text and of having experienced discrimination because of their gender. Their experience is that biblical texts sometimes present a patriarchal or male-centred point of view that devalues women and their contributions to the world. When feminist scholars read biblical texts, they consciously look for examples where women are included or excluded, how women are treated and whether women have a voice in the text. They also look for instances where women have been portrayed positively. The text is questioned and evaluated in light of their experience.

If readers believe that what they bring to the text – such as Christian beliefs, modern ideas of science and modern ways of thinking – are really in the text then they may mistakenly assume these modern ideas were the intention of the author. This confuses the *world in front of the text* with the *world behind the text*. It is helpful to come to a text acknowledging as much as possible the points of view we bring, but we have to be careful not to canonise our own reading of the text and make our interpretation the only interpretation.

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ACTIVITY 0.3

1. Read the creation story in Genesis 1.
   a. As you read the story, draw what you see in your mind.
   b. Look at your drawing, and then do an internet image search of the Hebrew worldview. Compare your results with your own representation – why do you think the Hebrew pictorial representation of the story differs from the one you drew?
2. Read Deuteronomy 22:28–29. Based on the text in this section about feminist readings, how might someone reading this story through a feminist lens respond to the text? Why might they respond in this way?

0.5 Conclusion

Today, biblical scholars stress the importance of examining biblical texts in a variety of ways. A useful method of biblical analysis is to use the three worlds of the text: the world behind the text, the world of the text and the world in front of the text.

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STRA

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N D

1 Sacred Texts

The Curriculum strand, 'Sacred Texts', encompasses three areas:

- Old Testament
- New Testament
- Christian Spiritual Writings and Wisdom.

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CHAPTER 1

Old Testament

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The various books within the Hebrew Scriptures are grouped under three major headings: **T**orah (Law), **N**evi'im (**Prophets**) and **K**etuvim (Writings), known by the acronym TaNaK. Throughout Years 7 to 9, you have studied various parts of the Torah and Prophets. In this section, we will explore some of the material in the Ketuvim, or Writings. While the books belonging to the Writings were in existence as early as 2 BCE, they were given a more formal shape in the late 1st century CE.

In the Jewish Bible, the books that comprise the Writings are: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles. This arrangement links five shorter books (Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther) called the Megilloth with major Jewish festivals and fast days. The Jewish canon concludes with the edict of Cyrus calling upon faithful Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the holy temple (2 Chronicles 36:22–23).

> 22In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in fulfilment
> of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD
> stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that
> he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom and also
> declared in a written edict: 23'Thus says King Cyrus of
> Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the
> kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build
> him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is
> among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be
> with him! Let him go up.'

In Christian Bibles, rather than having the Writings grouped together, the books belonging to the Writings are interspersed between the Former and Latter Prophets, based on the reasoning that the canon could be organised according to chronology, authorship and genre. The Book of Ruth, for example, is placed after the Book of Judges because the story of Ruth is set during the Judges period (today, however, we know that it was written much later). Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs are grouped together because people originally assumed (incorrectly) that Solomon was the author. The Christian Old Testament ends by looking forward to Elijah's return (Malachi 4:5–6), a reference that Christians once considered was fulfilled by John the Baptist in the New Testament. The way the books of the Writings are grouped within the Christian Bible is understandable because these books are a diverse collection rather than a unified whole like the Torah.

prophets
people who proclaim the message of God

The books in the Writings contain a wide range of genres and perspectives, from love poetry in Song of Songs to a short story in the Book of Ruth. One common understanding is that all of these books took place after the Babylonian Exile. Some of the material in Psalms and Proverbs may have existed in oral form prior to the exile, but the final form of the text is believed to be post-exilic.

The exile was the period of time from the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Babylonian Empire in 587 BCE and the exile of the Jews to Babylon in 586 BCE. The exile formally ended in 538 BCE, when the Persian conqueror of Babylonia, Cyrus the Great, gave the Jews permission to return to Jerusalem. The exile had a significant impact on the Jewish people, their way of life and their religious practice. When they returned from the exile, their homeland was reduced to a small area around Jerusalem and priests replaced kings as the dominant authority within the community. Some Jews decided not to return to their ancestral homeland and so were dispersed across the ancient Near East. The Jews who had remained in the homeland and not experienced exile in Babylon clashed with those who returned. The diversity within the books of the Writings reflects the diversity of the people who lived during the post-exilic period. The themes that emerge from these Writings focus on identity within Judaism and how to respond to the broader culture and society now that Judaism was a minority religion.

▼ **Figure 1.1** Contemporary Jerusalem

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1.1 Chronicles 1 and 2

The Book of Chronicles retells the history of the people found in Genesis through to the Book of Kings and is sometimes referred to as the Primary History. The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah provide an account of the history of the people during their time of exile in the Persian Empire and is referred to as the Secondary History. The Secondary History is important because it provides readers with a view of the world of Second Temple Judaism.

Chronicles 1 and 2 were originally a single book and their author, often referred to as the chronicler, wrote during the time of the post-exilic period, because the text refers to the Persian Empire and the return under Cyrus. The Book of Chronicles consists of four sections:

1 1 Chronicles 1–9 is a summary of Genesis through to 1 Samuel. Special attention is given to the Levites, who were descended from Aaron and called 'priests'. The priests were allowed to offer sacrifices, while other members of the group played a supporting role. Some scholars think the author of Chronicles belonged to the second class of Levites, because his writing supports them (1 Chronicles 6; 15:1–24; 23–26; 1 Chronicles 9:3–34).
2 1 Chronicles 10–29 is predominantly a narrative beginning with the reign of King David. In this section, the chronicler copies directly from sections of 2 Samuel, but omits many of the stories that show the deficiencies in David's behaviour, such as his scandalous encounter with Bathsheba and how he organised to have her husband killed in battle. In 1 Chronicles, David is presented as a priest-king and he is closely tied to the Temple.
3 In 2 Chronicles 1–9, King Solomon is also given a 'makeover' and through many omissions and additions, and much editorial shaping, he is presented as a wise and wealthy temple builder.
4 2 Chronicles 10–36 presents the Davidic dynasty from the united monarchy to the destruction of Jerusalem. Much of the material in this section comes from 1 and 2 Kings. Throughout the text, the northern monarchs are generally ignored, unless they interact with the Davidic house. The most conspicuous omission is that the military conquest and subsequent fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria is not even mentioned.

The chronicler accounts are very southern-focused because the Temple was in Jerusalem in the southern kingdom. The chronicler's history promotes a Jewish community centred on the Temple and the invitation to worship at the Jerusalem temple is extended to 'all Israel'.

▼ **Figure 1.2** A model of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem

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ACTIVITY 1.1

1. Compare the accounts of transporting the Ark found in the chronicler's history (1 Chronicles 13 and 15) with the Deuteronomic history in 2 Samuel 6. How do the two depictions of David differ? What details are added or omitted by the chronicler?
2. Read the following texts and identify how the chronicler reshaped the earlier story to communicate his own theological point of view.

2 Samuel 11:1; 12:26–31

[1]In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. . . .
[26]Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and took the royal city. [27]Joab sent messengers to David, and said, 'I have fought against Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the water city. [28]Now, then, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; or I myself will take the city, and it will be called by my name.' [29]So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, and fought against it and took it. [30]He took the crown of Milcom from his head; the weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. He also brought forth the spoil of the city, a very great amount. [31]He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, or sent them to the brickworks. Thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

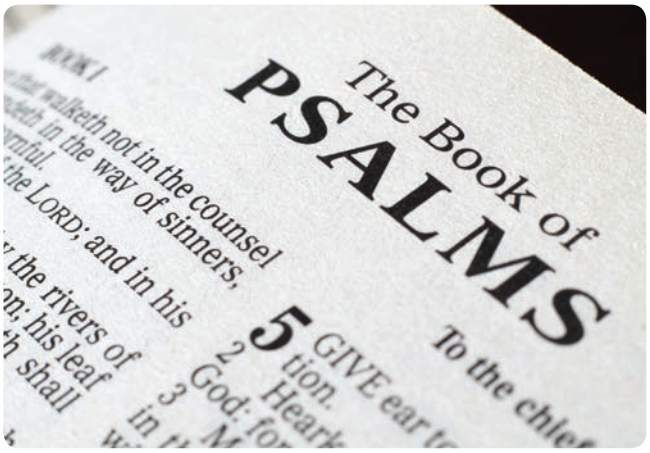
1 Chronicles 20:1–8

[1]In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, Joab led out the army, ravaged the country of the Ammonites, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. Joab attacked Rabbah, and overthrew it. [2]David took the crown of Milcom from his head; he found that it weighed a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. He also brought out the booty of the city, a very great amount. [3]He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work with saws and iron picks and axes. Thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.
[4]After this, war broke out with the Philistines at Gezer; then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Sippai, who was one of the descendants of the giants; and the Philistines were subdued. [5]Again there was war with the Philistines; and Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. [6]Again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great size, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; he also was descended from the giants. [7]When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him. [8]These were descended from the giants in Gath; they fell by the hand of David and his servants.

1.2 Psalms

The Book of Psalms, also known as the Psalter, is a rich and varied collection of poetry that provides valuable insights into personal and communal religious practice and piety in ancient Israel. While it is impossible to date individual psalms, many of which mention a king, Psalms 2, 45 and 72 originated before the exile, while others, such as Psalms 37, 89 and 137, come from the period of exile or the Second Temple period.

Because the book consists of over a hundred psalms composed over many centuries, there is no one author. Many of the Psalms have been attributed to David (*le-david*), but it is more accurate to translate *le-david* as 'for' or 'in honour of' David rather than meaning all the psalms were composed by David. When reading the Book of Psalms, it is important to remember that each psalm is a separate piece of poetry. It is also worthwhile remembering that we are not reading the psalms in their original language. We are reading a translation, and so the rhythm, rhyme, metaphors, symbols and other poetic devices used in Hebrew may not be obvious to us in English. We can, nevertheless, recognise that the psalms are poetry because of the way that their lines are printed on the page. We are also unable to recognise devices such as acrostic poems, which begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet, as in Psalms 25, 37, 111, 112, 119 and 145.



▲ **Figure 1.3** The Book of Psalms is a collection of poetry.

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One of the unique features of Hebrew poetry, and especially the Psalms, is the use of a particular literary genre called parallelism where, within two paired lines or couplets, the first line A is either similar to or the opposite of line B. An example of synonymous parallelism is: Line A: Heed my words. Line B: Listen to my voice. An example of antithetical or opposite parallelism is: Line A: The righteous are blessed. Line B: The wicked are cursed.

ACTIVITY 1.2

Read the following psalms and add the missing line to complete the synonymous or antithetical parallelism. The NRSV translation should be used for this activity:

- Psalms 19:1; 78:1; 120:2; 93:3
- Psalms 1:6; 73:26; 34:10; 37: 21.

1 Using the references in the list, complete the following parallelisms by adding in either the first or second line.

Synonymous parallelism	Antithetical parallelism
'Deliver me, O Lord, from lying lips,	but the way of the wicked will perish.
and the firmament [dome] proclaims his handiwork.	but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.
Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;	The wicked borrow, and do not pay back,
the floods lift up their roaring.	My flesh and my heart may fail,

2 Consider the following lines from the Psalms. Copy and complete the table by indicating, in the column on the right, whether they are examples of antithetical (A) or synonymous (S) parallelism.

Psalm and reference	A or S
for those blessed by the Lord shall inherit the land, but those cursed by him shall be cut off. (Psalm 37:22)	
They will collapse and fall, but we shall rise and stand upright. (Psalm 20:8)	
O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger, or discipline me in your wrath. (Psalm 38:1)	
Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. (Psalm 34:11)	
Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. (Psalm 51:1)	
Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. (Psalm 19:2)	
For the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land. (Psalm 37:9)	
O Lord, you God of vengeance, you God of vengeance, shine forth! (Psalm 94:1)	
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholds the righteous. (Psalm 37:17)	
Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me. (Psalm 40:13)	

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In English literature, there are various styles and forms of poetry such as love poems, epics and sonnets. The same is true for Hebrew poetry. The most common form of poetry used within the Psalms is the lament, which communicates a plea for deliverance from a distressing situation such as that expressed in Psalm 13, which asks for deliverance from enemies. Laments usually begin with an appeal to God, followed by a description of the complaint and a request for help. The voice of the psalmist is usually an individual, but it can sometimes be a community as a whole, as in Psalm 44. Occasionally, the lament is difficult to identify because of the language used, but most laments conclude by expressing confidence that God will respond to the author's requests.

Psalm 13

[1]How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
[2]How long must I bear pain in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

[3]Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,
[4]and my enemy will say, 'I have prevailed';
my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

[5]But I trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
[6]I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

ACTIVITY 1.3

Read Psalm 13. Identify the three major sections of the lament by recording the verse numbers next to the description below:

- appeal to God
- description of the complaint
- request for help.

Other poetic forms evident in the Psalter are psalms of thanksgiving, which describe a past experience of distress and then celebrate God's deliverance as well as God's goodness and faithfulness; and Hymns of Praise, which are not connected to any act of deliverance – rather, they are songs offering praise to God. A hymn might focus on the glories of creation, as in Psalm 19, or God's interaction with Israel, as in Psalm 106. Laments, thanksgiving psalms and hymns are the most dominant genres in the Psalter.

The Psalter, while one book, is subdivided into five 'books' emulating the five books of the Torah. Each book ends in a **doxology**, which is a short hymn that expresses praise to God. The fifth book is the climax and ends with a series of hallelujah psalms praising God. The list of the five books is presented in Table 1.1.

doxology
a short hymn of praise to God

▲ **Figure 1.4** Jewish male praying at the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) of the Temple

ACTIVITY 1.4

Read the following psalms and classify each as a psalm of lament, thanksgiving or praise. Quote from the psalm to support your claims.

- Psalm 13
- Psalm 29
- Psalm 30
- Psalm 12
- Psalm 54
- Psalm 103

▼ **Table 1.1** The five sections of the Book of Psalms emulating the five books of the Torah

Book	Contents	Doxology
Book 1	Psalms 1–41	Psalm 41:13
Book 2	Psalms 42–72	Psalm 72:18–20
Book 3	Psalms 73–89	Psalm 89:52
Book 4	Psalms 90–106	Psalm 106:48
Book 5	Psalms 107–150	Psalms 146–150

While each psalm is a distinctive literary creation, there are many that are similar in content and outline, and some sections of some psalms are even repeated within other psalms. For example, Psalms 14 and 53 are identical except for small differences such as the title of God, as shown in Table 1.2 on the next page.

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▼ **Table 1.2** Comparison of Psalms 14 and 53

Psalm 14	Psalm 53
[1]Fools say in their hearts, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. [2]The LORD looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God. [3]They have all gone astray, they are all alike perverse; there is no one who does good, no, not one. [4]Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call upon the LORD? [5]There they shall be in great terror, for God is with the company of the righteous. [6]You would confound the plans of the poor, but the LORD is their refuge. [7]O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.	[1]Fools say in their hearts, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they commit abominable acts; there is no one who does good. [2]God looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God. [3]They have all fallen away, they are all alike perverse; there is no one who does good, no, not one. [4]Have they no knowledge, those evildoers, who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call upon God? [5]There they shall be in great terror, in terror such as has not been. For God will scatter the bones of the ungodly; they will be put to shame, for God has rejected them. [6]O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion! When God restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

▲ **Figure 1.5** Hebrew Bible with *yad*, or pointer, used to follow the words from right to left

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Many scholars have tried to categorise the psalms; some identify three main types, while others suggest up to seven types. Psalms can generally be described under seven categories.

1 Hymns of praise (Psalms 103, 111 and 117), which praise God and God's acts of salvation or creation.
2 Laments (Psalms 22, 69 and 79), which begin with a complaint and end with confidence in God. Some laments are by an individual while others are from the community. Approximately one-third of the psalms are laments.
3 Thanksgiving (Psalms 30, 32, 65 and 66), which express gratitude of the community or an individual for God's favour or saving deeds.
4 Psalms of repentance (Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143), sometimes called penitential psalms, which express sorrow for sin.
5 Royal or messianic psalms (Psalms 2, 18, 21 and 110), which celebrate the king's coronation or successes, or ask for guidance and blessing on the king.
6 Wisdom psalms (Psalms 14, 37, 112 and 119), which often have a teaching function comparing good with evil, or wise actions with foolish actions; and some use devices that aid memorisation, such as the acrostic arrangements in Psalm 119 where each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
7 Historical psalms (Psalms 78, 105 and 106), which recount major events in Israel's history, especially those related to the Exodus. These psalms focus on the faithfulness of God's covenant with Israel and contrast it with the people's unfaithfulness.

ACTIVITY 1.5

Some of the psalms have been adapted and used in popular music. Psalm 23 has been used in many contemporary interpretations, including songs, films and modern rap.

Read Psalm 23 in the Bible and then select three of the songs listed below. Find their lyrics online, review them and, if possible, listen to the songs as well.

Artists and songs using Psalm 23:

- Coolio, 'Gangsta's Paradise', from *Gangsta's Paradise* (1995)
- The Grateful Dead, 'Ripple', from *American Beauty* (1970)
- Megadeth, 'Shadow of Deth', from *The System Has Failed* (2004)
- Kanye West, 'Jesus Walks', from *The College Dropout* (2004).

Now answer the questions below.

1. List the three songs that you selected and indicate how you would classify each of these songs musically (rap, hip-hop, rock and so on).
2. What is each song about?
3. How much of Psalm 23 is used in each of the songs? Does the artist alter the words of the psalm in any significant way?
4. Psalm 23 expresses confidence and trust in God in times of trouble. For each of these songs, consider how and why the artist may have altered that theme.

1.3 The Megilloth

The Megilloth (Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther) is a diverse collection of books, which, on initial reading, appear to have little in common other than their liturgical function.

Song of Songs

This book has multiple titles. In Hebrew it is known as Song of Songs or The Greatest Song, and in English it is also known as the Song of Solomon or Canticles. Most people are surprised that Song of Songs exists within the Bible because it is a collection of love poems. The book is comprised of speeches by a man and a woman with

▲ **Figure 1.6** The Megilloth consists of Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther.

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the occasional appearance of a female chorus called 'the daughters of Jerusalem'. The book is full of metaphors, which sometimes amuse modern readers; for example, 'your eyes are doves' (4:1). Of the three voices in Song of Songs, the female lover predominates, which has led to speculation that Song of Songs may have been authored by a woman; however, this has not been proved and remains speculation. Song of Songs is unique because it is the Bible's only love poem. Song of Songs looks at love and longing from both a woman's and a man's point of view, and it does so by relying entirely on dialogue, so what we learn about love is through what the lovers say about it.

Book of Ruth

The Book of Ruth is a short story whose main characters are all women. It is a well-told story consisting of four carefully crafted scenes rich in symbolism, wordplay and literary motifs. The story capitalises on the tensions between food and famine, child and childlessness, life and death. These contrasts are made explicit when, after the death of her husband and two sons, Naomi (which means pleasant) changes her name to Mara, meaning bitter. Similarly, Ruth (meaning friend) stays with her mother-in-law, while Orpah (meaning back of the neck) is told to leave. Other imagery exists in place names: there is a famine in Bethlehem, which actually means 'house of bread'.

There is little agreement among biblical scholars regarding when the story was written. The narrator refers to the period of the Judges, but many contemporary interpreters date the Book of Ruth within the monarchic period because of its Davidic genealogy. Other interpreters view the story of Ruth as a post-exilic response to the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah, which prohibited intermarriage and forced Israelite men to expel foreign wives. The Book of Ruth illustrates that Ruth, a woman from Moab, could become a faithful member of the covenant community. Jewish interpretations of the book present Ruth as the ideal religious convert who pledges her loyalty to the God of Israel.

ACTIVITY 1.6

Read the Book of Ruth and answer the questions below.

1. What is the primary setting of the story (time and place)?
2. What is the ethnic identity of the title character?
   a. What is the historical relationship between Israel and Moab?
   b. What do the Israelites think of these people?
3. What is the relational identity of the title character (whose daughter, wife, etc. is she)?
4. Does the title character strictly abide by the Torah and Jewish customs (family laws, dietary rules, etc.)? Use evidence from the text to support your response.
5. What makes the title character a biblical heroine?
6. What roles do non-Jews play in this story? Are they threatening towards Jews or helpful to them?
7. In what ways does this story reinforce or challenge the reform program of Ezra and Nehemiah?

Book of Lamentations

The Book of Lamentations, like the Psalter, originated as part of Israel's worship and is a heartbreaking cry of pain and grief by the survivors of a war. The major difference between Lamentations and the Psalter is that the poems of Lamentations all respond to one particular historical moment – the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon in 587 BCE – whereas the psalms cover a variety of time periods. In the Book of Lamentations, women feature prominently in the description of war's atrocities and serve as symbols of the pain of the people. The poems express the grief, anger and humiliation of the people, who feel rejected and abandoned by their God.

Lamentations has five poems corresponding to the chapter divisions of the book. All except one of the poems is created as an acrostic using the 22 characters of the Hebrew alphabet, with each stanza beginning with the successive letter of the alphabet. The writing of the poems not only demonstrates the literary skill of the poet/s, but also expresses Israel's grief from A to Z, or in Hebrew 'aleph to taw'.

dirges
laments or mournful songs/music

Many of the poems are used today to grieve the dead and their genres include laments, funeral songs and **dirges**. The poems attribute the fall of Jerusalem to the sins of the nation and God's judgement. God is notably absent from the many personas who speak in the book: a narrator describes the desolation of Jerusalem as an abandoned and bereaved woman; a nameless male captive calls for the people to return to God. The sentiments expressed in Lamentations reflect the bleak realities of the people who survived the siege of Jerusalem.

Both the Jewish and Christian canons attribute the poems in Lamentations to Jeremiah. However, even though the prophet's life coincided with the Babylonian destruction, it is unlikely that he was the author of Lamentations. Christian Bibles reflect this link to Jeremiah by placing Lamentations near the Book of Jeremiah. Jews recite the Book of Lamentations on the Ninth of Av,

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a sombre festival that commemorates the many losses suffered by Jewish people throughout their history, including the destruction of the temple by Babylon in 587 BCE and again in 70 CE by Rome.

Across the centuries, many composers, authors and artists have found inspiration in the Book of Lamentations. The American composer Leonard Bernstein included lyrics from Lamentations in his 1943 *Jeremiah* symphony. Rembrandt's 1630 work, *The Prophet Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem*, is inspired by Lamentations, as is the short story by Cynthia Ozick called *The Shawl: A Story and a Novella* (1989), in which a mother who loses her daughter in a concentration camp poignantly echoes the grief of the Daughter of Zion at the loss of her children.

▲ **Figure 1.7** Artist's impression of the Prophet Jeremiah

ACTIVITY 1.7

Use an online search engine to find each of the following works:

- Symphony No. 1, *Jeremiah* (1942), by Leonard Bernstein
- *The Prophet Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem* (1630), by Rembrandt
- *The Shawl: A Story and a Novella* (1989), by Cynthia Ozick.

Each of the works is a creative interpretation of Lamentations, effectively enabling the author or artist to respond to the original text and reimagine it in a different context or medium. Consider the works and complete the activities below.

1. Complete a three-way Venn diagram where you are able to compare and contrast the grief and suffering as depicted in each work.
2. International Holocaust Remembrance Day is commemorated on 27 January each year. In preparation for next year's event, your school has been asked to prepare a memorial that uses these artistic contributions as the central focus. Your task is to write a brief welcome, explaining the importance and justifying the inclusion of each of the works, while outlining their connection to the Book of Lamentations.
3. The world at the beginning of the 21st century has witnessed many devastating catastrophes that highlight human grief in the face of unimaginable carnage. Read Lamentation 3 and notice how, from Verse 21, there is a change in tone and a sense of hope. Select a quote from Lamentations and create either a poem, collage or artwork to depict the hope that comes beyond despair.

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Ecclesiastes

▲ **Figure 1.8** A medieval illumination of the Book of Ecclesiastes

The Book of Ecclesiastes questions the purpose of human existence and whether anything can ultimately give life meaning. Traditionally attributed to Solomon, the author of Ecclesiastes temporarily adopts the persona of Solomon (Ecclesiastes 1:12–2:26). The book's author is often called Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes 1:1–2, 12; 7:27; 12:8–10), which is a Hebrew word meaning 'assembler'.

The speaker in Ecclesiastes identifies himself as male and assumes a male audience. While there are women present in the text, they are slaves, concubines, mothers, wives and grinders of grain; they remain objects in the experiments of Ecclesiastes or incidental to his meditations.

One of the most famous poems from Ecclesiastes is Ecclesiastes 3.

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[1]For everything there is a season, and a time for every
matter under heaven:
[2]a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
[3]a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
[4]a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
[5]a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones
together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
[6]a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
[7]a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
[8]a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.
[9]What gain have the workers from their toil? [10]I have
seen the business that God has given to everyone to be
busy with. [11]He has made everything suitable for its time;
moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their
minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from
the beginning to the end. [12]I know that there is nothing
better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as
long as they live; [13]moreover, it is God's gift that all should
eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. [14]I know
that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can
be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done
this, so that all should stand in awe before him. [15]That
which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is;
and God seeks out what has gone by.
[16]Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of
justice, wickedness was there, and in the place of
righteousness, wickedness was there as well. [17]I said in
my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked,
for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for
every work. [18]I said in my heart with regard to human
beings that God is testing them to show that they are but
animals. [19]For the fate of humans and the fate of animals
is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have
the same breath, and humans have no advantage over
the animals; for all is vanity. [20]All go to one place; all are
from the dust, and all turn to dust again. [21]Who knows
whether the human spirit goes upwards and the spirit
of animals goes downwards to the earth? [22]So I saw that
there is nothing better than that all should enjoy their
work, for that is their lot; who can bring them to see what
will be after them?

In this poem, there are 28 oppositional activities that are said to be appropriate in their own season. This poem begins a series of meditations that question the value of the hierarchies implicit in dualistic thinking. Dualism is never neutral – one pole is always invested with more value than the other. But here, Ecclesiastes proclaims the value of all activities and emotions to be equal.

ACTIVITY 1.8

Read the identified extracts and respond to the questions below.

1. How is the author/speaker identified in Ecclesiastes 1–2? Describe the 'tests' that are performed in Chapter 2. What is the outcome of these tests?
2. What can you conclude about the figure who is called 'teacher' or 'preacher' in Ecclesiastes 7:27 and 12:8–10?
3. What sentiments are expressed about death in the following extracts: Ecclesiastes 1:14–17; 3:19–21; 6:1–6; 9:10?

Esther

The Book of Esther, the second book in the Bible to be named after a woman, is the story of how Esther averted an act of genocide against the **Diaspora** Jews of the Persian period. It consists of a simple plot where two good Jews (Mordecai and Esther) are pitted against an evil enemy (Haman). Each of the major characters experiences a reversal of fortunes: the Jewish orphan, Esther, becomes the queen of Persia; Haman, the powerful prime minister, is forced to honour his enemy and is executed on the gallows he had prepared for him; the Diaspora Jew, Mordecai, escapes death, receives royal honours and is made the new prime minister.

Diaspora
people living away from their homeland

The book is full of satire and exaggeration. For instance, the king holds a party that continues for 180 days, and because Haman is offended by one Jew, he offers an outrageous sum of money to have all Jews killed. Because of such detail, most scholars do not regard Esther as an historical account, but this in no way diminishes the book's significance. Like the stories of Joseph (Genesis 39–41) and Daniel (Daniel 1–6), Esther provides a model for how Diaspora Jews who live under persecution and oppression can rise to positions of influence in a foreign court. The Book of Esther advocates a middle course between cultural assimilation and sectarian withdrawal for Diaspora Jews. The book also explains the origins of the Jewish festival, Purim, which celebrates Jewish identity and survival in the face of non-Jewish hostility.

The books of the Megilloth (Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther) encompass a gamut of human experiences and emotions from love and loyalty to crisis and grief. The books also voice the concerns of Diaspora Jews living during the Second Temple period and the time of the exile. Many of the texts of the Megilloth originated in the context of worship, while other texts were later incorporated into the liturgical calendar and some promote a particular form of piety emphasising the restored

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▲ **Figure 1.9** Artist's impression of Queen Esther

temple and strict Torah observance. Together, all of the texts in the Megilloth provide different answers to questions related to Israel's identity.

1.4 Images of God

As well as providing insights into the society and the lives of ancient Israelites, the Old Testament also provides us with information regarding how the people experienced and imagined God. An understanding of images of God helps the reader to appreciate their relevance and application today. The biblical writers used their own language and experiences to describe God so that the images presented are culturally and historically bound. It is important, therefore, for contemporary readers to understand each of the various images of God in their historical and cultural settings.

In Psalm 104, God is described as creator of the universe. Verses 1–9 focus on the creation of the world; verses 10–18 on the provision of water; and in verses 19–26 the psalmist provides a compressed description of the agricultural year.

[1]Bless the LORD, O my soul.
O LORD my God, you are very great.
You are clothed with honour and majesty,
[2]wrapped in light as with a garment.
You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
[3]you set the beams of your chambers on the waters,
you make the clouds your chariot,
you ride on the wings of the wind,
[4]you make the winds your messengers,
fire and flame your ministers. (Psalm 104:1–9)

Throughout the psalm, the magnificence of God is celebrated through the beauty of the created world.

Some authors use a literary technique called personification, which ascribes human characteristics to God. When the ancient people read these words they interpreted the statements as an 'as if' rather than statements of fact. Psalm 97 refers to God as a king:

[1]The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad!
[2]Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

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[3]Fire goes before him,
and consumes his adversaries on every side.
[4]His lightnings light up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.
[5]The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,
before the LORD of all the earth. (Psalm 97:1–7)

Psalm 139 refers to God as a rescuer and searcher of hearts:

[1]O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
[2]You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
[3]You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
[4]Even before a word is on my tongue,
O LORD, you know it completely.
[5]You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
[6]Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it …
… For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
[14]I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well. (Psalm 139:1–14)

The image of the shepherd is one that is used in a figurative way throughout the Old Testament. A shepherd looked after sheep and goats, valuable animals in ancient Israel. Although a shepherd's work may be considered monotonous, it nevertheless called for endurance and patience. The search for suitable pastures often took the shepherd far from home and this may have meant harsh conditions, primitive lodgings and danger from wild animals and thieves. Many ancient peoples refer to their gods as shepherds and so it was not unusual that God was also referred to as a shepherd. In both Psalm 23 and Ezekiel 34, God is portrayed as the one who protects and cares for a helpless flock.

Psalm 23

[1]The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
[2]He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
[3]he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
[4]Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff –
they comfort me.
[5]You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
[6]Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.

Ezekiel 34:11–16

[11]For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. [12]As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all

▲ **Figure 1.10** Shepherd imagery appears throughout the Old Testament.

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the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. 13I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. 14I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. 16I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

The analogy of the shepherd appears frequently in the Psalms:

9… O save your people, and bless your heritage;
be their shepherd, and carry them forever. (Psalm 28:9)

… and You led your people like a flock
20by the hand of Moses and Aaron. (Psalm 77:20)

52… Then he led out his people like sheep,
and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.
53He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid;
but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. (Psalm 78:52–53)

For the prophets, too, it is a favourite literary device.

11He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep. (Isaiah 40:11)

1Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord. 2Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. 3Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. 4I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord. (Jeremiah 23:1–4)

Personification was employed as way of explaining an individual's and a community's relationship with God.

The biblical author uses images well-known to the people to explain how God looks after Israel. The people of ancient Israel were skilled artisans and many of them were potters. Many vessels, including lamps, eating bowls, vases and urns, were made from clay. While many of the early vessels were made by hand, some were made on a potter's wheel. The potter was considered a skilful artist and the potter and clay provided biblical writers with much inspiration. The theme of God as the master potter, shaping and moulding people and nations, is a common one throughout the Old Testament, especially in the writings of the prophets.

In the book of Jeremiah we read:

1The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 2'Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.' 3So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. 4The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

5Then the word of the Lord came to me: 6Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. (Jeremiah 18:1–6)

The prophet Isaiah also uses the image of the potter in Isaiah 29:16:

16You turn things upside down!
Shall the potter be regarded as the clay?
Shall the thing made say of its maker,
'He did not make me';
or the thing formed say of the one who formed it,
'He has no understanding'?

And in Isaiah 64:8 we read:

8Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

▲ **Figure 1.11** Throughout history, images of God have been predominately masculine.

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Many images of God are presented in the Old Testament. While a number of the images for God are masculine, there are also many images that are feminine. In Isaiah 49:14–16, we read that God is like a nursing mother:

[14]But Zion said, 'The LORD has forsaken me,
my Lord has forgotten me.'
[15]Can a woman forget her nursing child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.
[16]See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are continually before me.

In Hosea 11:3–4, God is described as a mother:

[3]Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
I took them up in my arms;
but they did not know that I healed them.
[4]I led them with cords of human kindness,
with bands of love.
I was to them like those
who lift infants to their cheeks.
I bent down to them and fed them.

Deuteronomy 32:11–12 describes God as a mother eagle:

[11]As an eagle stirs up its nest,
and hovers over its young;
as it spreads its wings, takes them up,
and bears them aloft on its pinions,
[12]the LORD alone guided him;
no foreign god was with him.

Later, in Deuteronomy 32:18, God is one who gives birth: 'You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.'

The Old Testament presents many images of God. These images not only teach people about God, but they also illuminate an infinite God who is too immense to be captured by one image and too varied to be trapped by one metaphor.

ACTIVITY 1.9

The table below contains references to various texts that use imagery and metaphor to try to explain the diversity and complexity of God as understood by the ancient Jewish people.

1. Working in groups of two or three, you are responsible for one of the passage/s listed below. Read the passage, copy and complete the table by providing answers to the questions listed in the table.

Bible reference	How is God portrayed? Consider God's actions and words. By what name/s is God referred? If you had to draw God according to this passage, what would you include?	What metaphors are used to explain and communicate God's sovereignty and power? Look for metaphors using weather, landscape, clothing, relationships, etc. Provide specific references. Does the metaphor change, develop or remain constant?
Shema Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:1–27		
Psalm 104 1:25		
Psalm 97:1–7		
Job 38		
Isaiah 40		
Hosea 11:3–4		
Deuteronomy 32:11–12		
Deuteronomy 32:18		
Isaiah 66:13		
Isaiah 42:14		
Psalm 131:2		
Psalm 123:3		

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 1.9 continued

2. When you have completed your part of the table, join with another group and compare and contrast the image of God and how it is portrayed. Create a Venn diagram that considers the metaphors used to depict God.
3. Divide into groups of two, take your Venn diagram and join another group of two who have considered different verses. Create a four-way Venn diagram that looks more closely at the similarities and differences of the images of God as depicted in the passages.
4. When you have finished sharing and have sufficient information, write a paragraph that responds to the question: To what extent do the many manifestations of God, as depicted in the imagery in Old Testament texts, challenge or reinforce the understanding that God is neither male nor female?

1.5 Conclusion

The various books within the Hebrew Scriptures are grouped under three major headings: Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets) and Ketuvim (Writings), which are known by the acronym TaNaK. In the Jewish Bible, the books that comprise the Writings are: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles. This arrangement links five shorter books (Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther), called the Megilloth, with major Jewish festivals and fast days.

▲ **Figure 1.12** Torah scrolls in the ark at the Portuguese Sephardic Synagogue in the old Jewish district of Amsterdam, Holland

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CHAPTER 2

New Testament

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The New Testament consists of 27 books made of up four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), the Acts of the Apostles, 21 **epistles** or letters and the Book of Revelation. In previous year levels, you have studied the **synoptic gospels** (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and the Acts of the Apostles. In this section, we will explore the Gospel of John and the letters of Paul.

epistle
written communication in the form of a letter

synoptic gospels
the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are considered synoptic because of their similarity in content

2.1 Gospel of John

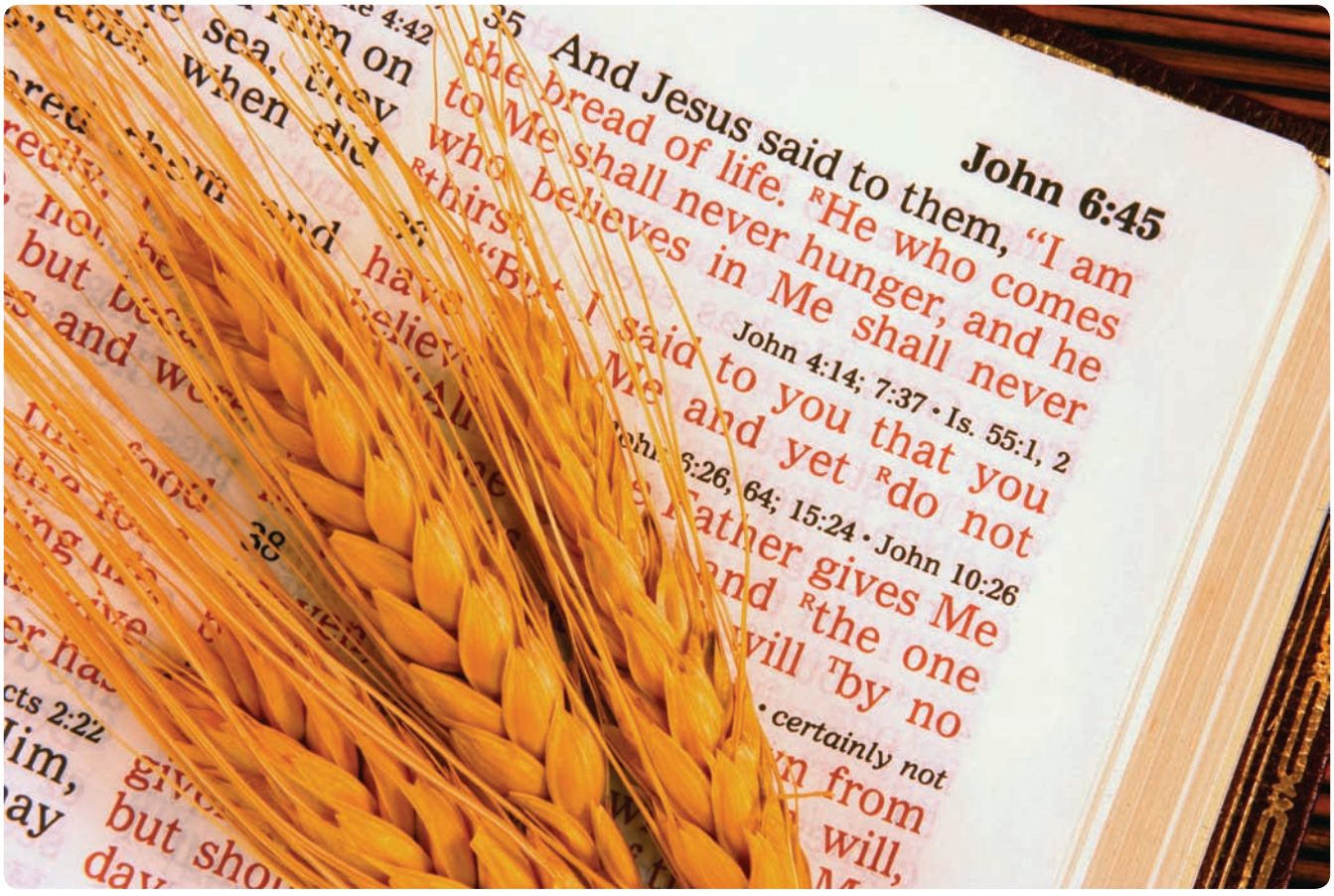
There is no single story of the life of Jesus in the New Testament. Each of the gospels tells the story of Jesus from the particular perspective of the faith community from which it emerged. The gospel writers selected details from the life and ministry of Jesus and highlighted particular understandings of the ways in which Jesus revealed God to the world. The Gospel of John does this through two major themes: Christology (who is Jesus?) and discipleship (how do believers respond?).

Behind the Text

The author of John's gospel, like the authors of the other gospels, remains anonymous. The name 'John' was attached to the gospel by the early church community and there is no evidence to suggest that the gospel was written by the apostle of this name. The gospel names 'the beloved disciple' as the guarantor of its tradition (19:35; 21:20–24), but does not give his name. The gospel was written in Greek, a language that was spoken throughout the Mediterranean world.

Much of the action within John's gospel takes place in and around Jerusalem, whereas the synoptic gospels only have Jesus in Jerusalem just prior to his arrest and crucifixion. The social context of the 1st-century Mediterranean world was very complex. After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE, the people of Israel became subjects of the Roman Empire and had to live under Roman occupation, so all their religious, social and cultural interaction took place under imperial domination.

The community from which the Gospel of John emerged was faced with complex choices: should they remain as members of the Jewish tradition; should they continue to worship in the synagogue and also worship privately with


John 6:45
And Jesus said to them, "I am
the bread of life. He who comes
to Me shall never hunger, and he
who believes in Me shall never
John 4:14; 7:37 • Is. 55:1, 2
said to you that you
and yet do not
6:26, 64; 15:24 • John 10:26
Father gives Me
and the one
will by no
• certainly not
from
will,

▲ **Figure 2.1** The Gospel of John

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followers of the Jesus movement; or should they break away and openly worship as the followers of Jesus and risk persecution by the Romans? It appears that the primary audience of John's gospel was a group of Jewish Christians who were torn between their allegiance to their Jewish roots and the emerging Christian community. As far as the author of John's gospel is concerned, the third option was the only one available – John challenges his readers not to take the easy way out, but to stand up and demonstrate witness to the risen Jesus.

The Gospel of John begins with a prologue that sets the scene for what is to follow (John 1:1–18):

[1]In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2]He was in the beginning with God. [3]All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being [4]in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. [5]The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

[6]There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. [7]He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. [8]He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. [9]The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

[10]He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. [11]He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. [12]But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, [13]who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

[14]And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. [15](John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me." ') [16]From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. [17]The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. [18]No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The prologue is not unlike an overture to a musical, in which a short rendition of all the major themes from the songs in the musical are played as a way of introducing the audience to the music they are about to hear. Later, when the audience hear the songs, they recognise them from the short renditions they have heard in the overture. One of the themes of the prologue of John is **incarnation** – God assumed human nature. It is introduced in Verse 14, 'the Word became flesh and lived among us', and this important theological point propels the reader into the rest of the gospel. In order to understand John's gospel, readers have to understand incarnation and how God is revealed in the person of Jesus.

incarnation
in this context, the process by which the Word of God became flesh

Of the Text

The Gospel of John is divided into two major sections: Chapters 2–12 (Jesus' ministry) and Chapters 13–21 (Jesus' last days – his arrest, trial, death and resurrection). The central focus of both sections is how Jesus, through his words and actions, reveals God. A further subdivision is sometimes made into four sections: the Prologue (1:1–18); the Book of Signs (1:19–12:50), which features a number of miracles; the Book of Glory (13:1–20:31), in which Jesus prepares the disciples for his imminent departure; and the Epilogue (21:1–25), which contains Jesus' post-resurrection appearances in Galilee. Many scholars consider the Epilogue to be a later addition to the gospel.

▲ **Figure 2.2** Light and darkness are used symbolically in the Gospel of John.

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The author of the Gospel of John uses simple, everyday Greek, but many words are used symbolically. The author often begins with everyday concepts such as light, water and bread, and then leads the reader into their symbolism as they relate to Jesus and how God is revealed through Jesus. Throughout the gospel, the reader notices the use of pairs of opposites such as light/darkness, above/below, spirit/flesh, free/slave, truth/lies, and contrasting verbs such as live/perish, accept/reject, believe/not believe, see/blind, love/hate. These dualistic contrasts are particularly evident in John 3:16–21:

> 16'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 17'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. 20For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 21But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.'

The author also uses a unique literary style combining short phrases, repeated words, rhythmic language and serious pronouncements. Many of the words and phrases put into the mouth of Jesus have multiple meanings. Often, the Johannine Jesus says something to a character who misunderstands him, and then Jesus explains or reinterprets the situation so that the person understands the symbolic or spiritual nature of the statement. An example of a misunderstanding is in John 4:32–34:

> 32But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' 33So the disciples said to one another, 'Surely no one has brought him something to eat?' 34Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.'

The disciples misunderstand and think that Jesus is referring to something to eat rather than the symbolic meaning attached to the second half of the statement, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.'

Another example is in John 11:11–15:

> 11After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' 12The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' 13Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. 14Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. 15For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.'

The disciples do not understand that Lazarus is dead and that when Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, it is a sign for the disciples to believe in him. There are no parables in John's gospel and the author's use of miracles as signs is different from the synoptic writers.

The titles used for Jesus in John's gospel are different from those used in the synoptic gospels. In the synoptic gospels, Jesus is referred to as Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah and Rabbi. In John's gospel, Jesus is referred to as the Logos or the Word of God, and the Lamb of God: titles that are much more symbolic and contain deep theological meaning.

ACTIVITY 2.1

Identify the seven signs in the Book of Signs, then copy and complete the table.

Biblical reference	Sign	Possible explanation or meaning
John 2:1–11		
John 4:46–54		
John 5:1–9		
John 6:1–14		
John 6:15–25		
John 9:1–8		
John 11:1–46		

In Front of the Text

The Catholic Church uses a three-year cycle for gospel readings for the liturgical year. The Gospel of Matthew is Year A, the Gospel of Mark is Year B and the Gospel of Luke is Year C. The Gospel of John does not feature as one of the gospels within the three-year cycle, but rather is scattered throughout the three years. In Holy Week, each year, sections of John's gospel are used – for instance, the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet is only in John. In Year C, John's gospel features during the Easter season and in Year B the story of John the Baptist from John 1:6–8 and 19–28 is used for the third Sunday of Advent. The fact that the Gospel of John is predominantly a series of discourses, rather than a narrative, may be one reason that it is featured for particular feasts of the Church's year.

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2.2 Women in the Gospel of John

Interestingly, unlike the synoptic gospels, women play a significant role in the Gospel of John. The first miracle in John's gospel (the miracle at the wedding in Cana, 2:1–11) occurs at a woman's initiative. Women are Jesus' main conversational partners in three stories where Jesus reveals his identity, vocation and the nature of true discipleship: John 4:4–42 (Jesus and the Samaritan woman); 7:53–8:11 (the woman accused of adultery); and 11:1–44 (Mary, Martha and Jesus). Women also watch over the death of Jesus, including its preparation (12:1–8), the crucifixion (19:25–27) and the resurrection (20:1–18).

2.3 The Wedding at Cana (2:1–11)

The miracle of the wedding at Cana, unique to John's gospel, is the opening event in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus is invited to a wedding, as is his mother, Mary, who is the catalyst for the miracle in the story. When the wine at the wedding feast runs out, Mary tells Jesus. His response, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come' (John 2:4) may appear harsh to our modern ears, but it is the author's way of reminding people that Jesus is free of human control. His mother says to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you' (John 2:5), demonstrating discipleship by trusting that Jesus will act. The miracle Jesus performs, turning water into wine, takes place in the presence of family and friends and shows the power of God acting in the lives of everyday people.

▲ **Figure 2.3** The wedding at Cana

2.4 Jesus' Final Days (John 13–21)

The second half of John's gospel (Chapters 13 to 21) is carefully crafted into three sections. The first section has Jesus alone with his disciples (Chapters 13 to 17). The second section has Jesus going into the wider society, where he is arrested, tried and crucified (Chapters 18–19). In the third section, Jesus rises from the dead and is alone again with the disciples (Chapters 20–21).

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▲ **Figure 2.4** Stained-glass window of the crucifixion of Jesus

In John's gospel, the final days of Jesus' life on earth are known as the Farewell Discourse because Jesus speaks to his disciples before his arrest, trial and death. In the Farewell Discourse, Jesus prepares the disciples for what is about to happen. The theme of 'love' runs throughout the discourse. At the heart of Jesus' vision for the community is the community's love for one another. This vision of love is most explicit in statements such as:

> [34]I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. [35]By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:34–35)
>
> This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (John 15:12)
>
> I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another. (John 15:17)

The Gospel of John makes it clear that the Christians' love for one another is modelled on Jesus' love for his followers. Jesus loves his followers by:

- making God known to them: '[10]Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. [11]Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves' (John 14:10–11)
- giving them God's word: '[14]I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world' (John 17:14)
- embodying God's love: '[23]I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me' (John 17:23)
- calling many and varied sheep into his fold: '[16]I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd' (John 10:16)
- calling his followers 'friend', not servant: '[14]You are my friends if you do what I command you. [15]I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father' (John 15:14–15)
- laying down his life for his friends: '[17]For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. [18]No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father' (John 10:17–18).

All of these actions are models for how the emerging Christian community is to love one another.

The author of John's gospel uses symbolism and metaphor to help people understand the message. In the Farewell Discourse, Jesus uses the metaphor of the vine and the branches to explain the Christian community: Jesus is the vine and the ones who love Jesus are the branches; God is the vine grower who looks after the vine.

> [1]I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. [2]He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. [3]You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. [4]Abide in me as I abide in

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you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. 6Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. 9As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 10If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. (John 15:1–11)

The vine metaphor describes the Christian community as a community of mutuality, as is Jesus' relationship with God. Individuals within the community will prosper when they realise that they are part of the whole. This is in stark contrast to today's world where individualism and success are often valued over community and the common good. The metaphor of the vine and the branches also provides a non-hierarchical image of church. All branches are rooted together in one vine and only when people work together can the best be achieved.

2.5 Mary Magdalene and the Risen Jesus (20:1–18)

▲ **Figure 2.5** Icon of Mary Magdalene preaching the risen Jesus to the disciples

All four gospels note that early on Easter morning the women, including Mary Magdalene, go to Jesus' tomb. In John's gospel, Mary Magdalene makes the discovery of the empty tomb. The story of Mary Magdalene in Chapter 20 is the most detailed of the four gospel accounts of the women at the tomb. There are two scenes: 20:1–10 (Mary at the tomb) and 20:11–18 (Mary and the risen Jesus).

In the first scene, Mary arrives at the tomb to find it empty. She runs and reports the news to Peter and the beloved disciple, suggesting that someone must have taken Jesus' body out of the tomb. Peter and the beloved disciple run to the tomb and are unable to say what has happened to the body of Jesus. In the second scene, Mary is alone in the tomb, weeping. Two angels appear to her, saying, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' Mary answers 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' She turns around and sees Jesus, but does not recognise him. Jesus has a conversation with Mary, and the reader, knowing the pattern from previous parts of John's gospel, waits, anticipating Mary's recognition of Jesus. When Mary recognises Jesus for who he is, Jesus tells her to go to the disciples. She runs to the disciples and proclaims, 'I have seen the Lord!' Her announcement of the presence of the risen Jesus is the core of the Easter gospel. Her confusion and sadness at the empty tomb have been transformed by

▲ **Figure 2.6** Mary Magdalene is first to proclaim the risen Jesus.

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her encounter with the risen Jesus. Mary Magdalene is the first to see the risen Jesus, the first Easter witness and the first to tell the others what she has seen. Mary Magdalene is the first disciple of the risen Jesus.

The Gospel of John, written late in the 1st century, provides significant information about the eventual separation of the followers of Jesus' group from Judaism. The author of John's gospel presents Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God. The style of the writing is unique within the four gospels and the author speaks of the presence of God among the people in a distinctive way: 'the Word became flesh and lived among us' (John 1:14).

ACTIVITY 2.2

1. Read each of the passages listed below. In each passage, Jesus gives his disciples a message. What is the message in each passage? Copy the table and in the final column, summarise the general theme of these messages.

Passage	What is the message Jesus is leaving for his disciples?	What theme permeates each of the messages?
John 14:15		
John 21:23–24		
John 15:8–9		

2. Use the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7421 to watch the scene from the 1998 movie *Armageddon*, where Bruce Willis' character Harry says goodbye to his daughter Grace. What parallels can you draw between this scene and the passages listed above? List three points of similarity between the clip and the biblical texts.
3. Read John 20:1–18 and respond to the following: 'Mary Magdalene is often referred to as "the apostle to the apostles"'. Why might she have been given this title? Refer to the text to support your response.

2.6 Epistles

Of the 27 books in the New Testament, 21 are called letters or *epoistolai*. Letter writing was used in the ancient world for official, royal and business correspondence, as well as private correspondence. Summaries of official correspondence occur in 2 Samuel 11:14–15 and 1 Kings 21:8–10. There is an example of a letter used for religious purposes in Jeremiah 29:1–23, but using letters as a form of religious correspondence is not common in the Old Testament. However, the use of letters as a form of religious correspondence became quite common in New Testament times and many of these letters have been attributed to Paul.

Today, the words 'letter' and 'epistle' are used interchangeably in the New Testament, but some scholars have attempted to make a distinction between the two. A letter is a non-literary form of communication between people that is usually of a confidential and personal nature and is intended for the person or persons to whom it is addressed. Most of the letters in the Old Testament fit the above description. Epistles, on the other hand, are an artistic literary form usually intended for a public audience. An epistle is a carefully crafted piece of writing

ACTIVITY 2.3

1. Read 2 Samuel 11:14–15, 1 Kings 21:8–10 and Jeremiah 29:1–23. What is the focus of the letter in each extract? Copy the table below and complete a summary of the content.

2 Samuel 11:14–15	1 Kings 21:8–10	Jeremiah 29:1–23

2. What is the difference between the content in these letters and a letter you might write to a friend or acquaintance? Use a quote from one of the letters to support your answer.
3. Assume the role of one of the elders and nobles who were the recipients of the letter in 1 Kings 21:8–10. Write a letter back to the sender once her instructions have been fulfilled. Maintain a tone that is consistent with the letter in the biblical passage.

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▲ **Figure 2.7** Twenty-one books of the New Testament are called letters or epistles.

that resembles a dialogue or an essay focused on teaching a particular topic. We cannot be certain whether the letters in the New Testament were intended to be epistles for public reading or meant for individuals only.

2.7 Literary Form of Ancient Letters

Just as letter writing today has a particular literary form and style, so too did letters from the Greco-Roman period. Ancient letters generally had four parts:

1 *Opening salutation*, naming the sender and the addressee and a short greeting.
2 *Thanksgiving*, which sometimes included a prayer or blessing.
3 *Message*, or the body of the letter, which often focused on ethical instruction.
4 *Closing*, which included wishes of peace and blessing, sometimes with greetings to or from specific people.

ACTIVITY 2.4

Locate the Letter to Philemon in the New Testament. Read the letter and copy and complete the table below, showing how the Letter to Philemon complies or does not comply with the standard literary form of letters from the Greco-Roman period.

Literary form	Verses quoted from letter
1 *Opening salutation*, naming the sender and the addressee and a short greeting.	
2 *Thanksgiving*, which sometimes included a prayer or blessing.	
3 *Message*, or the body of the letter, which often focused on ethical instruction.	
4 *Closing*, which included wishes of peace and blessing, sometimes with greetings to or from specific people.	

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On the whole, the letters of Paul follow the previously mentioned formula.

Some of the letters in the New Testament are personal correspondence to a named person or persons, while others are addressed to a group and were usually read aloud to the assembled group. Letters intended for public reading were usually dictated by the author to a scribe. Occasionally, the main ideas were given to the scribe, who then composed the actual wording. The early Christian community used the literary genre of the letter to inform, encourage and even correct local church communities as they spread across the Roman Empire.

Most of the letters were addressed to a particular community, at a particular time, responding to particular circumstances within that community. Sometimes the writer is responding to questions that the community has raised, but we do not have the questions posed, we only have the response given. Consequently, New Testament letters sometimes leave unanswered questions for 21st-century readers. We also need to remember that the letters are not diary entries and, therefore, do not present an organised, systematic record of early Christian thought and activity. Once the letters were received, they were read aloud by a church leader to the community when it gathered for worship.

Paul's mission to the Gentiles opened up some tension between the Jerusalem church and Paul's non-Jewish converts. The Jerusalem church, led by Peter, James and John, required people to keep all the commandments of Judaism as well as the new practices of the Jesus movement. Paul, on the other hand, did not require new converts to keep all the commandments of the Torah. Consequently, arguments broke out concerning whether the Gentiles who joined the community should be circumcised and follow Jewish dietary laws. At the Council of Jerusalem ca 50 CE (Acts 15), a compromise was reached whereby Gentiles did not have to be circumcised. Some of these issues arose more than once and we can see that they are addressed in two epistles: 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 3:27–28. As the church expanded and more Gentiles converted, Christian missionaries had to develop new ways of explaining Jesus' life, death and resurrection to the newcomers.

Paul, prior to his conversion, was a well-educated Jew and a Pharisee (Pharisees emphasise the importance of the commandments and Mosaic Law). Paul struggled to explain to other Christians the connections between the Law and his new life as a follower of Jesus. Some of these concerns are articulated in his letters to the communities of Galatia and Rome.

In his letter to the Galatians, he refers to the law given to Moses as a form of preparation for Christ:

> [23]Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. [24]Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. [25]But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, [26]for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. (Galatians 3:23–26)

Paul came to believe that God's saving love is freely offered to all and that faith is trusting and accepting the gift of God:

> [23]… since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; [24]they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus …[28]For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. (Romans 3:23–24, 28)

In the Letter to the Corinthians, Paul continues this understanding when he says that all people are called to live each day in the 'spirit' of Christ:

> [17]So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! [18]All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; [19]that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. [20]So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:17–20)

2.8 Letters of Paul

The New Testament attributes 13 letters to Paul, but probably six of these were written by other authors. It was not uncommon to assign the name of a well-respected person to written materials, especially if the works professed similar beliefs. Most scholars agree that the following letters were authored by Paul: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon. The First Letter to the Thessalonians is considered to be one of the earliest letters, while the letters to the Romans and Philippians are considered to be the last letters written by Paul.

Paul's letter to the people of Corinth identifies several challenges he faced when working among the Gentiles. Paul lived in Corinth, a wealthy port city, for about 18 months.

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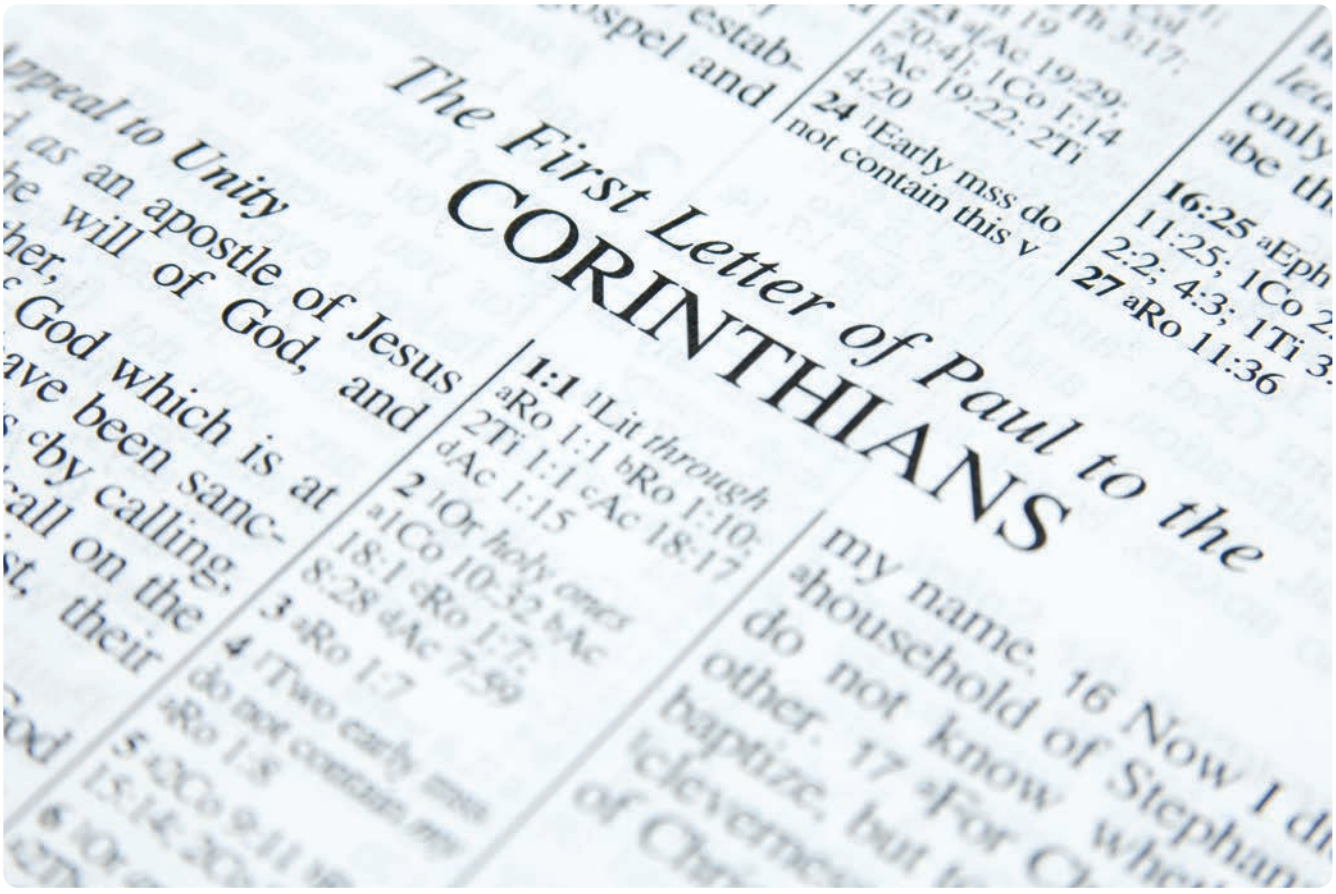
The First Letter to the Corinthians was written about 56 CE and addresses topics such as: the difference between human wisdom and divine wisdom, which is revealed in the cross and resurrection of Jesus; several ethical issues; the proper use of spiritual gifts; and teachings related to the Resurrection of Christ. The Second Letter to the Corinthians is a combination of several shorter letters or fragments (Chapters 10 to 13).



▲ **Figure 2.8** Letter from Paul to the Corinthians

First Letter to the Thessalonians

Behind the Text

After being expelled from Philippi, Paul travelled to Thessalonica to establish a church. Thessalonica, a port on the northern shore of the Aegean Sea, was the capital city of the Roman province of Macedonia and was devoted to the imperial cult of Rome. Noted for its economic, commercial and political importance, it attracted a cosmopolitan population because of its location on the Egnatian Way, a road that ran from Byzantium to the Adriatic Sea.

Paul's time in Thessalonica was not without incident. Paul and his followers were accused of acting against the Roman emperor by promoting Jesus as a 'king'. Paul was forced to flee Thessalonica, but the persecution continued for the community. Concerned about how this new Christian community might cope under the pressure of persecution, Paul sent Timothy to support the believers and their faith.

The First Letter to the Thessalonians was written about 49–50 CE, approximately 20 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. Paul wrote the letter as a form of encouragement for the Thessalonians to continue their commitment to the message of the gospel. He used the theme of persecution to emphasise the importance of having a relationship with God and he urges the community to turn away from their former immorality while they wait for the return of Jesus. The early Christian communities thought the eschaton (the end times) would occur within their lifetime.

Of the Text

The letter is a personal letter written according to the norms of letter writing in the Hellenistic world. The letter can be divided into six sections.

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Salutation; this includes the writers(s), recipient(s) and a greeting.

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2 Thessalonians 1:2–3:13 Thanksgiving:
   a First Thanksgiving Period: the Thessalonians' reception of the Gospel (1:2–2:12) – Paul's thanksgiving is expressed in the form of prayer
   b Second Thanksgiving Period (2:13–3:13).
3 Exhortation (4:1–12):
   a on chastity (4:1–8)
   b on charity (4:9–12).
4 Eschatology (4:13–5:11):
   a First Apocalyptic Disclosure: the Parousia (4:13–18)
   b Second Apocalyptic Disclosure: Eschatological Existence (5:1–11).
5 Final Exhortation (5:12–22):
   a call for order in the community (5:12–13)
   b call for various functions (5:14–22).
6 Closing wishes and salutation (5:23–28).

ACTIVITY 2.5

Examine the First Letter to the Thessalonians.

1. Record the opening salutation. Using three different colours, highlight the name of the sender/s, the recipients and the greeting.
2. Read 1:2–2:12. Select a quote that demonstrates the faith of the Thessalonians even though they have endured difficult times.
3. Read 4:9–12. Explain in your own words what is being asked of the people.
4. Read 5:1–11. This section uses apocalyptic language (symbolic language that talks about the end of the world). What message about the future is conveyed in this section? What does the Christian community need to do?
5. Read 5:12–22. In the closing section of the letter, Paul encourages and reminds the people of what they should be doing. List all the things he reminds them about.
6. Read 5:23–28. Using different colours, identify the wishes of peace and the blessing.

2.9 Conclusion

As the followers of the Jesus movement expanded, men and women used their talents to contribute to the functioning of their particular community. Often, people who owned a large house offered it for use as a gathering place, and sometimes they served as community leaders. Other ministries mentioned in the letters include apostles, teachers, preachers, elders, deacons and missionaries. Paul's letters also reveal that women, as well as men, carried out these ministries in the early church.

The letters provide insights into how the early Christian communities were established, the challenges they faced and how the people worked together to spread the Good News to the 'ends of the earth'.

▲ **Figure 2.9** Artist's impression of Paul teaching the people of Athens

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CHAPTER 3

Christian Spiritual Writings and Wisdom

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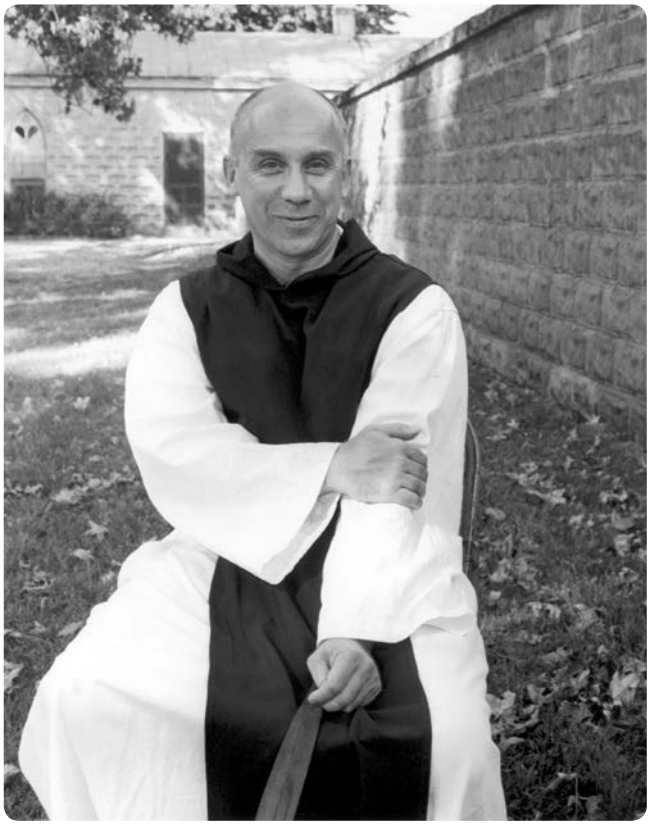
In addition to the sacred texts contained in the Bible, Christianity has a rich and varied library of texts written by people who are considered role models or saints. Sometimes known as spiritual writings, these texts, while often personal reflections, provide great insight into people's search for God and how individuals interpret the message of God in their lives.

In this chapter, we will explore some of the spiritual writings of the Catholic Church written between 1918 and the present. We will focus on the writings of Thomas Merton and Joan Chittister, as well as two social encyclicals: *Deus Caritas Est* and *Laudato Si'*.

3.1 Thomas Merton



▲ **Figure 3.1** Thomas Merton's writings are a source of inspiration for people and the Church.

Considered one of the most influential Catholic authors of the 20th century, Thomas Merton (1915–68), a Trappist monk from the Abbey of Gethsemani, Kentucky, in the United States, was a writer, mystic, poet and social activist who wrote more than 70 books on spirituality and social justice.

Merton was born in France to an American Quaker mother and New Zealander Anglican father, and was baptised an Anglican. Not long after his birth, the First World War broke out, so his family left France for the United States. When he was six year old, his mother died of cancer and his childhood was spent living in various locations with his father, grandparents, aunts and uncles. When he turned 18, he travelled to Europe and visited Rome. Merton visited many churches in Rome, and he wrote that he was particularly inspired by a 6th-century mosaic in the apse of the Basilica of Saints Cosmas and Damian.

The mosaic is an image of the Second Coming, or Parousia: it has an image of Christ in the centre standing on red clouds, reflecting the text of Matthew 24:30: 'Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory'. On the right side of the mosaic is St Paul presenting St Damian and on the left side St Peter presenting St Cosmas. Also depicted on the left is Pope Felix IV, who holds a model of the Church.

▲ **Figure 3.2** The Basilica of Saints Cosmas and Damian in Rome

ACTIVITY 3.1

Go online and explore images of the mosaic. Then, use the text at the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7422 to help you complete the task below.

1. Copy and complete the table below that identifies the symbols in the mosaic and their related meanings. You may need to go beyond the text and draw on prior knowledge to complete this task.

Symbol	Meaning
Red clouds	
Martyr's crown	

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 3.1 continued

Symbol	Meaning
	Judge and ruler
Pope Felix IV and model of the Church	
St Peter and St Paul	
	River Jordan
	Phoenix
Lamb of God with silver halo	
	12 Apostles
Hill and rivers	
Seven jewelled candlesticks	

2. Write a summary in two to three sentences of your understanding of the overall meaning of the mosaic. What do you believe are the key message/s the artist/s are trying to convey?
3. Considering your response to Question 2, how might you convey this same meaning to a 21st-century audience? Either describe a modern mosaic you would create or use mixed media, or collage, to create a modern artwork that conveys a similar message. Consider who would be in your art, how you might represent Christ and what symbolism you would use for a contemporary audience. Write a short justification of your artistic choices.
4. Imagine what a young Thomas Merton would have seen in this mosaic the first time he saw it. What do you think would have inspired him and what might have challenged him? Write a short diary entry (100 words) as a young Thomas Merton, and explore one aspect of the mosaic that has resonated with you. Explain how and why.

In 1938, as a student at Columbia University, Merton converted to Catholicism. When he graduated from university, he taught English to college students. During this time, as he considered the possibility of becoming a priest, his spiritual life was influenced by his involvement in works of charity and justice and the spirituality of the 19th-century poet and artist William Blake. In 1941, at the age of 26, Merton joined the Trappist monks known as the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance. Also known as Trappistines, this contemplative religious order has monasteries for monks and monasteries for nuns. The religious order follows the Rule of St Benedict and Trappistines live their lives seeking union with God, through Jesus Christ and in community with others. In 1944, Merton made his temporary profession and was given a white cowl, black scapular and leather belt; in 1949, he was ordained a priest and given the name Father Louis.

ACTIVITY 3.2

As a class, divide into home groups of five students. Students number off and become specialists – that is, all the 1s join together, all the 2s join together, and so on. Use the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7423 and access the Newcomer's Guide tab. Each specialist group is allocated an aspect of a Trappist's life to research and summarise, and to take back to their home group.

Copy and complete the table below to gather your information.

Category	Key points of information
History • General • Famous monks • The Rule of St Benedict • The beginnings of the Cistercian order – 12th century • The Trappist reform – 17th century	
Monastic life • Monastery buildings • Officers of the community • Prayer and meditation • Bodily health and the end of life • Leisure and technology	
Monastic discipline • The vows • Rules • Lifestyle	
Social life • Entrance and departures • Family and neighbours • Loneliness • Holidays and celebrations	
New Cistercian saints • Blessed Father Michael Cyprian Tansi • Blessed Maria Gabriella Sagheddu • St Raphael Arnaz Baron • Blessed Marie-Joseph Cassant	

After each specialist group has collected their information, they will need to write a succinct summary. This can be in the form of a paragraph that everyone contributes to, a five-slide PowerPoint or dot points in a table.

The specialists then return to their home group and share their summaries. Each member of the home group is responsible for taking their own notes. After everyone has reported back, students need to prepare a report for a local newspaper that explains to a general audience the Trappists and their lives in the modern world.

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Spiritual Writings

In 1948, Merton published *The Seven Story Mountain*, an autobiography and the story of his search for faith that led him to Catholicism. The book resonated with people across the world who were looking for renewed personal meaning and direction after surviving the destruction of the Second World War.

The following extracts from *The Seven Story Mountain* provide some insight into Merton's search for faith in God that led to his conversion to Catholicism at 23 years of age.

> The life of the soul is not knowledge, it is love, since love is the act of the supreme faculty, the will, by which man is formally united to the final end of all his strivings – by which man becomes one with God.

> The logic of worldly success rests on a fallacy: the strange error that our perfection depends on the thoughts and opinions and applause of other men! A weird life it is, indeed to be living always in somebody else's imagination, as if that were the only place in which one could at last become real!

> Contemplation means rest, suspension of activity, withdrawal into the mysterious interior solitude in which the soul is absorbed in the immense and fruitful silence of God …

> Indeed, the truth that many people never understand, until it is too late, is that the more you try to avoid suffering, the more you suffer, because smaller and more insignificant things begin to torture you, in proportion to your fear of being hurt. The one who does most to avoid suffering is, in the end, the one who suffers most: and his suffering comes to him from things so little and so trivial that one can say that it is no longer objective at all …

> We refuse to hear the million different voices through which God speaks to us, and every refusal hardens us more and more …

> … you are called to a deep interior life …

ACTIVITY 3.3

As a class, consider each of the above quotes and identify how they might relate to modern society.

1. Working in pairs, select one of the quotes. Using various contemporary magazines, find images and headlines that show what Merton is warning against (such as suffering and fear, ignoring the plight of humanity, striving for perfection, etc.) and create a collage with the quote at the centre. Present your work to the class and justify your choice of images and captions.
2. Using another of Merton's quotes, create a song list of five contemporary songs whose lyrics explore some of the issues Merton is raising. Share the lyrics of one of the songs with the class.
3. Write a prayer or reflection that responds to one of the quotes. You may wish to create a class booklet of prayers that can be published in the school library.

▲ **Figure 3.3** Merton supported non-violent civil rights movements in the 1960s.

The 1960s was a time of social protest in the United States, and Merton entered the public debates about race riots as well as America's involvement in the Vietnam War. He said that race and peace were the two most urgent issues of the time and described himself as a strong supporter of the non-violent civil rights movement, which he called 'the greatest example of Christian faith in action in the social history of the United States'. His social activism was severely criticised by some Catholics and non-Catholics, as many thought that his political writings were inappropriate because he was a monk and, therefore, should not comment on social or political issues.

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Merton believed the only way to change the world was to influence and change the ideas of people, so his writings are focused on bringing people's attention to serious issues of justice. He was very outspoken about war, particularly America's involvement in the Vietnam War and the Cold War conflict. His superiors silenced him from speaking publicly on antiwar issues and it was not until 2006 that his *Cold War Letters*, which condemned violence and the build-up of nuclear arms and weapons of mass destruction, were published. His campaigning for peace and justice even influenced the activist singer Joan Baez, who spent time at a retreat with him in Gethsemani.

Some of Merton's statements about justice include:

> Non-violence seeks to 'win' not by destroying or even by humiliating the adversary, but by convincing him that there is a higher and more certain common good than can be attained by bombs and blood. Non-violence, ideally speaking, does not try to overcome the adversary by winning over him, but to turn him from an adversary into a collaborator by winning him over. (from *Faith and Violence: Christian Teaching and Christian Practice*, 1968)

> I am concerned … with 'good' people, the right-thinking people who stick to the principle all right except where it conflicts with the chance to make a fast buck. It seems to me that there are very dangerous ambiguities about our democracy in its actual present condition. I wonder to what extent our ideals are not a front for organised selfishness and systematic irresponsibility … If our affluent society ever breaks down, what are we going to have left? (from *Cold War Letters*, December 1961, Letter no. 10)

> The real focus of American violence is not in esoteric groups but in the very culture itself, its mass media, its extreme individualism and competitiveness, its inflated myths of virility and toughness and its overwhelming preoccupation with the power of nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and psychological overkill. If we live in what is essentially a culture of overkill, how can we be surprised at finding violence in it? Can we get to the root of the trouble? In my opinion, the best way to do it would have been the classic way of religious humanism and non-violence exemplified by Gandhi. That way seems now to have been closed. I do not find the future reassuring. (from *Thomas Merton*, ed. Gordon C. Zahn, 1971)

> When we live superficially … we are always outside ourselves, never quite 'with' ourselves, always divided and pulled in many directions … we find ourselves doing many things that we do not really want to do, saying things we do not really mean, needing things we do not really need, exhausting ourselves for what we secretly realise to be worthless and without meaning in our lives. (from *Love and Living*, 1965)

> It is sometimes discouraging to see how small the Christian peace movement is, and especially here in America where it is most necessary. But we have to remember that this is the usual pattern, and the Bible has led us to expect it. Spiritual work is done with disproportionately small and feeble instruments … And now above all when everything is so utterly complex, and when people collapse under the burden of confusions and cease to think at all, it is natural that few may want to take on the burden of trying to effect something in the moral and spiritual way, in political action. Yet this is precisely what has to be done. (from a letter to Jean and Hildegard Goss-Mayr, *The Hidden Ground of Love*, ed. William H. Shannon, 1962)

ACTIVITY 3.4

1. The concept of non-violence is not new. It has strong roots in history and is supported in various communities today. Go the homepage of the International Centre of Nonviolence Australia via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7424, and look at the graphic that explores the action required for non-violence to occur. As a class, divide up each of the components of the circle and assign to groups. Each group is to create a poster that shows how their action could be explored and expressed in society to foster non-violence. Provide specific practical examples and suggestions.
2. a In small groups, discuss the notion of integrity.
   b Brainstorm a list of temptations that society provides that can tempt individuals to compromise their sense of integrity.
   c Use one of those temptations and look at how and why it is attractive, and how the broader society responds to it and its trappings.
   d Write a prayer that allows people to focus on the pitfalls of surrendering to such temptations. Include ways of looking at the world from a different perspective in your prayer.
3. Merton wrote the quote about the future of violence in 1971, indicating that he had a pessimistic view of the future. Do you agree with his prediction? Why, or why not? Provide reasons to support your perspective.
4. Consider Merton's words about superficiality from *Love and Living*. Make a list of the things in your life that distract, divide and exhaust you, and compare it with a list of things that give you fulfilment, satisfaction and energy. Complete an inventory of how much time and/or money you devote to each and compare the two. Create a pledge or a resolution that helps you to articulate what you want to focus on.
5. Why does Merton suggest that it is a burden to try to effect something in the moral and spiritual way, with political action? Consider a contemporary situation. You can look at news and current affairs websites, and make suggestions as to what political action Merton might recommend that is both moral and spiritual. Discuss in small groups.

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Even before inter-religious engagement and dialogue had become mainstream in the Catholic Church, Merton encouraged people of different religious beliefs to dialogue so that they might better understand each other. He developed an interest in Buddhism and the Dalai Lama praised him for his efforts in promoting a greater understanding of East–West monastic life and teaching. Merton noticed a similarity between some elements of Zen Buddhism and the life and practices of the ancient Christian Desert Fathers. The Desert Fathers often gave their followers puzzling riddles to think about. These riddles, similar to koans (puzzling statements used in Zen Buddhism), encourage monks to meditate and think deeply rather than come to an easy or facile answer. Before he died, Merton visited Thailand, Sri Lanka and India as well as spending three days in conversation with the Dalai Lama. Thomas Merton was accidently electrocuted while attending an interfaith conference in Bangkok in 1968.

The influence of Thomas Merton and his writings increased after his death. The Jesuit theologian James Martin identifies seven influences that Merton had in the world:

1 His book, *The Seven Story Mountain*, which openly addressed issues of people feeling lost and searching for spiritual meaning, touched the core of millions of people.
2 He reminded people that prayer is for everyone, not just monks.
3 He called people to be the best they can be when he wrote 'for me to be a saint means to be myself'.
4 He encouraged people to understand religions other than their own and, in particular, he explored the depths of Buddhism and tried to make connections between Christianity and Buddhism.
5 He challenged people to be themselves and to focus on God, saying: 'Why do we spend our lives striving to be something we would never want to be, if we only knew what we wanted? Why do we waste our time doing things, which, if we only stopped to think about them, are the opposite of what we were made for?'
6 He worked tirelessly for social justice and was very outspoken about war.
7 He reminded people that everyone is extraordinary and everyone is ordinary.

In 2015, Pope Francis praised Merton as a 'source of spiritual inspiration and a guide for many people … a man of prayer, a thinker who challenged the certitudes of his time and opened new horizons for souls and for the Church. He was also a man of dialogue, a promoter of peace between peoples and religions'.

Thomas Merton's life, actions and writings continue to have a profound impact on many people's lives. Countless social justice centres are named after him and, since 1972, the Thomas Merton Award for peace has been awarded to individuals and groups who have made a significant contribution to world peace. Some recipients include Dorothy Day (1973), Joan Baez (1975), Dom Hélder Câmara (1976), The People of Poland (1981), Richard Rohr (1994), Sister Joan Chittister (2001), Martin Sheen (2012) and Congresswoman Barbara Lee (2015).

ACTIVITY 3.5

1 Imagine your school has been selected to host the annual Thomas Merton Award ceremony. To prepare your community for this very significant honour, your class has been tasked with the important role of creating posters for the school and the broader community that showcase some of the previous recipients of the award. You and a partner are required to research one of the names listed below, or select from the more extensive list that can be found by searching for the Thomas Merton Award winners online. You will need to consider who the person is, what they have achieved, where they had the most impact, and how and why they did what they achieved. Further useful links can also be found in the table below.

Award recipient	Link
Dorothy Day	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7426
Joan Baez	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7427
Dom Helder Camara	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7429 http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7430
Richard Rohr	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7431
Martin Sheen	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7432 http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7433
Sr Joan Chittister	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7434
Congresswoman Barbara Lee	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7435

2 As the hosts for this year's event, you are able to nominate someone who has had a significant impact on creating or sustaining peace in a part of Australia that faces specific challenges.
   a As a class, explore the website found via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7436 and discuss the areas where there is a strong need for social justice.
   b Create a list of people who are advocates in each area. If you are unable to do so, you may need to do some specific research by exploring one of the areas.
   c With a partner, select a person you wish to nominate and conduct some research to enable you to create a proposal as to why the person you have nominated would be a worthy recipient. A good starting point for your research might be local news items and news sources. Some suggestions include Stan Grant, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, Catherine McGregor, Giles Parkinson, Julian Burnside, Professor Gillian Triggs, Dr Eileen Pittaway and Dr Linda Bartolomei.

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3.2 Joan Chittister OSB

▲ **Figure 3.4** Joan Chittister OSB

Sister Joan Chittister OSB (Order of Saint Benedict) is a famous contemporary Benedictine spiritual writer, activist and social leader. She is a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Pennsylvania, and her life's work has focused on the development of contemporary spirituality, a renewal of Benedictine life for the contemporary world and working for justice for the oppressed and marginalised, particularly for those in prison. She has been described as having three passions: a passion for God, a passion for justice and a passion for life. Sister Joan is also a Catholic media personality, having appeared on Oprah Winfrey's *SuperSoul Sunday*, *60 Minutes*, as well as blogging for the *Huffington Post*.

Born in 1936, Joan Chittister has spent over 40 years advocating for peace, human rights and women's issues, and Church renewal. She is regarded as a profound and prophetic voice in progressive Christianity. She is a founding member and co-chair of the Global Peace Initiative of Women, a partner organisation of the United Nations that is a world network of women peace builders. This network of religious leaders crosses barriers created by politics, national and international boards, ethics and religious differences to bring the message that none of the great religious traditions can justify what is happening to the poorest of the poor – women and children – in today's war-ravaged world.

Sister Joan is the author of more than 50 books and her spiritual vision is grounded in the spiritual practices of the Rule of St Benedict, which includes listening, hospitality, humility and peace. Sister Joan has said that contemporary spirituality 'is about the hunger in the human heart. It is a commitment to immersion in God, to seeking that has no end'.

The Benedictine tradition that forms and informs the spiritual writings of Joan Chittister is grounded in prayer emerging from scripture. As well as prayer, Benedictine life invites people to focus on good works and to practise non-violence. In 2011, Sister Joan established Benetvision, a website and media communications network for people seeking to deepen their spirituality. Part of the website is *Monasteries of the Heart*, which is a contemporary way of sharing Benedictine spirituality with people. The website hosts close to 60 online monasteries where people meet to pray using a Benedictine format (*Lectio Divina*), to discuss issues of justice and to plan action.

ACTIVITY 3.6

1 Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7437 and read the information about Benedictine spirituality.
   a This information makes reference to an integrated, authentic spiritual life. What do you think is meant by this? What steps might need to be covered to attempt to achieve this in modern life?
   b Use this link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7438 to access information regarding the Rule of St Benedict. Explain the centrality of charity, humility, stability and faithfulness. When you have finished reading the section, complete the activity in the 'Now it's your Turn' section. When everyone has finished their personal reflections, share with the class the insights you have gained about a spiritual life and how the Rule of St Benedict might be useful in people's lives.
   c As a class, allocate the five sections under 'More ways to understand . . .' to small groups. Each group is responsible for reading the quotes in their section and synthesising the ideas. Create a small poster that brings together the Benedictine ways of living a spiritual life and place these around the room for others to share.

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 3.6 continued

2 Go to the Monasteries of the Heart website via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7439. Here you will see an icon of Oscar Romero. Oscar Romero was the Archbishop of San Salvador and an outspoken critic of the government of El Salvador, which had committed many abuses of human rights and persecuted the people of El Salvador. Romero worked with the poor of El Salvador to improve the conditions of the people. In his weekly radio sermons, Romero would list the disappearances of people who had been murdered by the government. In 1980, Romero was assassinated while saying Mass.

People are invited to participate in a *Lectio*, which focuses on the image of Romero. Begin the *Lectio* prayer by quietly looking at the icon.

a What is the icon saying to you?
b What feelings or thoughts are evoked?
c What is God's message for you as you reflect on the image?

Joan Chittister is a provocative spiritual writer, as can be seen in the following extracts from her work.

Spirituality without a prayer life is no spirituality at all, and it will not last beyond the first defeats. Prayer is an opening of the self so that the Word of God can break in and make us new. Prayer unmasks. Prayer converts. Prayer impels. Prayer sustains us on the way. Pray for the grace it will take to continue what you would like to quit. (from *In a High Spiritual Season*, 1995)

Beware the religion that turns you against another one. It's unlikely that it's really religion at all. (from *God Speaks in Many Tongues: Meditate with Joan Chittister,* 2013)

We have made money our god and called it the good life. We have trained our children to go for jobs that bring the quickest corporate advancements at the highest financial levels. We have taught them careerism but not ministry and wonder why ministers are going out of fashion. We fear coddling the poor with food stamps while we call tax breaks for the rich business incentives. We make human community the responsibility of government institutions while homelessness, hunger and drugs seep from the centres of our cities like poison from open sores for which we do not seek either the cause or the cure. We have created a bare and sterile world of strangers where exploitation is a necessary virtue. We have reduced life to the lowest of values so that the people who have much will not face the prospect of having less.

Underlying all of it, we have made women the litter bearers of a society where disadvantage clings to the bottom of the institutional ladder and men funnel to the top, where men are privileged and women are conscripted for the comfort of the human race. We define women as essential to the development of the home but unnecessary to the development of society. We make them poor and render them powerless and shuttle them from man to man. We sell their bodies and question the value of their souls. We call them unique and say they have special natures, which we then ignore in their specialness. We decide that what is true of men is true of women and then say that women are not as smart as men, as strong as men or as capable as men. We render half the human race invisible and call it natural. We tolerate war and massacre, mayhem and holocaust to right the wrongs that men say need righting and then tell women to bear up and accept their fate in silence when the crime is against them.

What's worse, we have applauded it all – the militarism, the profiteering and the sexisms – in the name of patriotism, capitalism and even religion. We consider it a social problem, not a spiritual one. We think it has something to do with modern society and fail to imagine that it may be something wrong with the modern soul. We treat it as a state of mind rather than a state of heart. Clearly, there is something we are failing to see. (from *Heart of Flesh: Feminist Spirituality for Women and Men*, 1998)

It is precisely women's experience of God that this world lacks. A world that does not nurture its weakest, does not know God the birthing mother. A world that does not preserve the planet, does not know God the creator. A world that does not honour the spirit of compassion, does not know God the spirit. God the lawgiver, God the judge, God the omnipotent being have consumed Western spirituality and, in the end, shrivelled its heart. (from *Heart of Flesh: Feminist Spirituality for Women and Men*, 1998)

The symbolic evidence of women's invisibility in the human race is most clear perhaps in her suppression, her camouflage, her negation even in language. Women are subsumed, excised, erased by male pronouns, by male terminology, by male prayers about brotherhood and brethren, even and always by exclusively male images of God. The tradition that will call God spirit, rock, key door, wind and bird will never ever call God mother. So much for the creative womb of God; so much for 'I am who am.' So much for 'Let us make human beings in our own image, male and female, let us make them.' What kind of spirituality is that? To take the position that using two pronouns for the human race is not important in a culture that has thirty words for car, multiple words for flowers, and dozens of words for dog breeds is to say that women are not important. (from *Heart of Flesh: Feminist Spirituality for Women and Men*, 1998)

The spiritual life, in other words, is not achieved by denying one part of life for the sake of another. The spiritual life is achieved only by listening to all of life and learning to respond to each of its dimensions wholly and with integrity. (from *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St Benedict Today*, 1991)

Sister Joan Chittister OSB is one of the most influential, respected and outspoken religious and social leaders of the 21st century.

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▲ **Figure 3.5** Sister Joan Chittister is an advocate for many social justice issues, including women's rights.

ACTIVITY 3.7

1. Sister Joan Chittister has stated, in relation to the breakdown of society, 'We consider it a social problem, not a spiritual one. We think it has something to do with modern society and fail to imagine that it may be something wrong with the modern soul. We treat it as a state of mind rather than a state of heart.'
   a. To what extent do you agree with her? Provide reasoning and evidence to support your point of view.
   b. Imagine that Sister Joan is right about the need for spiritual nourishing and growth, and the government has decided that a new program will be implemented in schools to foster this. You and your team have been tasked with the opportunity of presenting your proposal for Year 10 students. What would you include in such a program? What would you exclude, and how much time would you provide? In your proposal, provide a justification for your approach.
2. Sister Joan is a proud feminist because she speaks about injustice towards women as individuals and as a collective. In small groups, select a sentence or two from her writings and use it as inspiration to create a poster that supports her point. You may use images, quotes from others and information from news and current events.
3. Many people find this type of spirituality confronting and reject it because they deem it too political. In what way/s can a person be spiritually responsible without being political, and respond to issues that impact on the world we share with others? Discuss this with your class or a small group and make note of your conclusions.

3.3 Church Encyclicals

Another type of spiritual writing is an encyclical. Encyclical simply means a 'circulating letter'. Within the Catholic Church context, it is a letter to the whole Church community, usually written in the name of the Pope. Encyclicals address many and varied topics, but some of the most well-known encyclicals are called social encyclicals because they specifically address issues related to society and the world.

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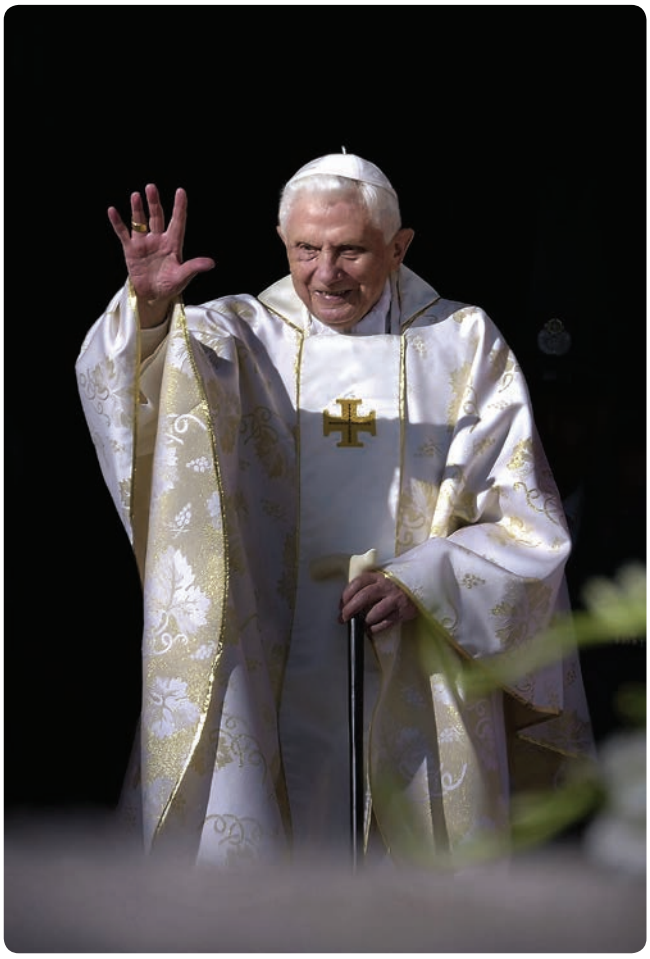
Deus Caritas Est



▲ **Figure 3.6** Pope Benedict XVI

In January 2005, Pope Benedict XVI issued his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est* (God Is Love), the title of which expresses the core of the Christian faith. Essentially, the encyclical is a meditation on love. *Deus Caritas Est* has two major parts: the first part presents a theological and philosophical reflection on the different dimensions of love, while the second part is an explanation of how love is to be embodied in the daily life of Christians and what it really means to love one's neighbour.

The word 'love' has multiple meanings and there are many words in Latin and Greek that describe different types of love. *Eros*, for example, is the love between two people, love which means that people will be there for each other no matter what; *agape* is self-sacrificing love. The person of Jesus embodies both *eros* and *agape*: in dying on the cross, Jesus gave himself to raise and save all people.

The opening sentence of *Deus Caritas Est* reminds people that in a world where hatred and violence predominate, Christians should focus on the words of the First Letter of John: 'God is love, and the person who abides in love abides in God and God abides in them' (1 John 4:16). Some of the key ideas presented in *Deus Caritas Est* include:

Extract 1

If in my life I fail completely to heed others, solely out of a desire to be 'devout' and to perform my 'religious duties', then my relationship with God will also grow arid. It becomes merely 'proper', but loveless. (*Deus Caritas Est*, para. 18)

Extract 2

Faith, hope and charity go together. Hope is practised through the virtue of patience, which continues to do good even in the face of apparent failure, and through the virtue of humility, which accepts God's mystery and trusts him even at times of darkness. Faith tells us that God has given his Son for our sakes and gives us the victorious certainty that it is really true: God is love! It thus transforms our impatience and our doubts into the sure hope that God holds the world in his hands and that, as the dramatic imagery of the end of the Book of Revelation points out, in spite of all darkness he ultimately triumphs in glory. Faith, which sees the love of God revealed in the pierced heart of Jesus on the Cross, gives rise to love. Love is the light – and in the end, the only light – that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working. Love is possible, and we are able to practise it because we are created in the image of God. To experience love and in this way to cause the light of God to enter into the world – this is the invitation I would like to extend with the present Encyclical. (*Deus Caritas Est*, para. 39)

Extract 3

The State which would provide everything, absorbing everything into itself, would ultimately become a mere bureaucracy incapable of guaranteeing the very thing which the suffering person – every person – needs: namely, loving personal concern. We do not need a State which regulates and controls everything, but a State which, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, generously acknowledges and supports initiatives arising from the different social forces and combines spontaneity with closeness to those in need. The Church is one of those living forces. (*Deus Caritas Est*, para. 28b)

Extract 4

There are times when the burden of need and our own limitations might tempt us to become discouraged. But precisely then we are helped by the knowledge that, in the end, we are only instruments in the Lord's hands; and this knowledge frees us from the presumption of thinking that we alone are personally responsible for building a better world. In all humility we will do what we can, and in all humility we will entrust the rest to the Lord. It is God who governs the world, not we. We offer him our service only to the extent that we can, and for as long as he grants us the strength. To do all we can with what strength we have, however, is the task which keeps the good servant of Jesus Christ always at work: 'The love of Christ urges us on' (2 Cor 5:14). (*Deus Caritas Est*, para. 35)

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Extract 5

Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others much more than their outward necessities; I can give them the look of love which they crave. (*Deus Caritas Est*, para. 18)

Extract 6

Within the community of believers there can never be room for a poverty that denies anyone what is needed for a dignified life. (*Deus Caritas Est*, para. 20)

▲ **Figure 3.7** Helping others is an expression of faith, hope and love.

ACTIVITY 3.8

Read the extracts from *Deus Caritas Est* on pages 50–51. Copy the table below, summarise the main idea expressed in each extract and identify a practical way that each one could be carried out in society.

Extract	Central idea/message	Practical application
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

What exactly does this quote mean: 'Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others much more than their outward necessities; I can give them the look of love which they crave.' What does it mean to 'see through the eyes of Christ'?

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3.4 *Laudato Si'*

▲ **Figure 3.8** Pope Francis

Pope Francis' social encyclical *Laudato Si'*, published in June 2015, calls on people to pause and take account of the direction in which society is moving, because with rapid progress people have taken advantage of creation and the poor of the world. Addressed to 'all people of good will', Pope Francis calls the Church and the world to acknowledge the urgency of the environmental challenge. While environmental issues have been addressed in previous encyclicals of other popes, this was the first time that the environment and ecological issues have been the main focus of an encyclical. *Laudato Si'* is written in a very accessible style, with tangible examples. One of the key messages of *Laudato Si'* is encapsulated in the following quote:

> We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature. (no. 139)

Laudato Si' makes a passionate call to all people to take 'swift and unified global action' to address the destruction of the environment.

The encyclical consists of an introduction and six chapters grouped into three sections reflecting the 'See, Judge and Act' processes often used as a model for social analysis related to justice issues. Chapter 1, 'See', examines the symptoms of environmental degradation, focusing on climate change, depletion of fresh water and the impact of carbon-intensive economies. Pope Francis reminds people that many of the world's resources are being plundered because of a short-sighted approach to the economy, which he calls 'the modern myth' of unlimited material progress. He encourages cooperatives and business practices that promote diversity and creativity. He is not against progress or profit, but he makes a point that true progress is one that has human dignity at its heart and profit must be earned responsibly.

ACTIVITY 3.9

Below are three quotes from Chapter 1 of *Laudato Si'*.

1 Read each of the quotes and comment on what Pope Francis is saying about the need to pay attention to the environment.

> Technology, which, linked to business interests, is presented as the only way of solving these problems, in fact proves incapable of seeing the mysterious network of relations between things and so sometimes solves one problem only to create others. (no. 20)

> The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. In many parts of the planet, the elderly lament that once beautiful landscapes are now covered with rubbish. Industrial waste and chemical products utilized in cities and agricultural areas can lead to bioaccumulation in the organisms of the local population, even when levels of toxins in those places are low. (no. 21)

> If present trends continue, this century may well witness extraordinary climate change and an unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequences for all of us. A rise in the sea level, for example, can create extremely serious situations, if we consider that a quarter of the world's population lives on the coast or nearby, and that the majority of our megacities are situated in coastal areas. (no. 24)

2 a Mobile phones, plastic water bottles and disposable plastic eating ware are forms of waste that require our immediate attention to avoid causing long-term environmental problems. Conduct some research to discover how these items can be toxic to the environment; how and if they are being recycled; and what can be done to avoid these items piling up in landfill.

b The disposing of waste and the by-products of industry continue to cause major problems for societies. Conduct some research to find out what waste item/s are the most difficult to deal with in terms of their number and inability to be recycled or broken down. What solutions might be proposed in your local area/state for the disposal of such waste?

c Pope Francis notes in the third quote the problem of rising sea levels as a result of climate change. Many nations in the Pacific region are having to take measures to relocate villages and townships due to rising sea levels.

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 3.9 continued

Which specific countries in the Pacific are being affected? What are these nations and other nations doing to assist the people affected by rising sea levels?

d On 3 April 2010, the Chinese Coal Company Ship *Shen Neng 1* became grounded off the coast near Rockhampton, causing damage to the Great Barrier Reef. The article that can be accessed via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7440 details the legal wrangle that occurred over the amount of money that should be paid by the shipping company to the Queensland Government.

Read the article and make your own determination of what should be paid to the Queensland Government and explain your reasons. How does this article reflect Pope Francis' concerns about the environment? Think about the sentiments mentioned in quote 1 in Question 1.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of *Laudato Si'*, the 'Judge' section, focus on scriptural traditions as well as providing a serious critique of anthropocentrism, materialism and consumerism. Chapter 4 also reminds people of the interconnectedness of creation. Pope Francis points out that our approach to the world is one of domination, which is not only bad for the environment but also deeply damaging to ourselves and our relationships with those around us. He highlights how immense technological developments have ruptured social bonds and caused many people to become self-focused and greedy: 'The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume' (no. 204). Pope Francis calls for a revolution where people overcome individualism and develop a new lifestyle.

ACTIVITY 3.10

1 Copy and complete the table below to explain the meanings of the following words:

Word	Meaning
Anthropocentrism	
Materialism	
Consumerism	
Interconnectedness	

2 The following quote opens Chapter 2, 'The Gospel of Creation', in *Laudato Si'*:

Why should this document, addressed to all people of good will, include a chapter dealing with the convictions of believers? I am well aware that in the areas of politics and philosophy there are those who firmly reject the idea of a Creator, or consider it irrelevant, and consequently dismiss as irrational the rich contribution which religions can make towards an integral ecology and the full development of humanity. Others view religions simply as a subculture to be tolerated. Nonetheless, science and religion, with their distinctive approaches to understanding reality, can enter into an intense dialogue fruitful for both. (no. 62)

The Pope notes that not all people belong to a religious tradition or even believe in God, and he also notes that science and religion can work together.

a Why do you think the Pope made this statement?

b How do you think that science and religion can work together? How do you envisage this occurring?

3 At the start of paragraph 66 in Chapter 2, Pope Francis notes the following:

The creation accounts in the book of Genesis contain, in their own symbolic and narrative language, profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality. They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself. (no. 66)

In some translations of the Book of Genesis, it is noted that humans were to have 'dominion' over Earth, and some scholars, particularly in the Roman Catholic tradition, have preferred to use the term 'stewardship'. Thinking about the quote above and your knowledge of the term anthropocentrism, why do you think scholars have emphasised 'stewardship' rather than 'dominion'?

4 In Chapter 3, Pope Francis writes:

Technology has remedied countless evils which used to harm and limit human beings. How can we not feel gratitude and appreciation for this progress, especially in the fields of medicine, engineering and communications? (no. 102)

List some technological advances within the fields of medicine, engineering and communication. While advances have been made, how might this same technology also have been damaging?

5 Pope Francis continues in Chapter 3 to express his concern about the power some people have gained through technology. He notes:

Never has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used. We need but think of the nuclear bombs dropped in the middle of the twentieth century, or the array of technology which Nazism, Communism and other totalitarian regimes have employed to kill millions of people, to say nothing of the increasingly deadly arsenal of weapons available for modern warfare. In whose hands does all this power lie, or will it eventually end up? It is extremely risky for a small part of humanity to have it. (no. 104)

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ACTIVITY 3.10 continued

What do you think Pope Francis means by 'in whose hands does all this power lie'? Why does he think that it is 'extremely risky' for some people to have this technology and power? Provide examples in contemporary times of how technology has been abused by some people.

6 a In Chapter 4, Pope Francis notes the importance of sustainability and regeneration. Provide examples of sustainability and regeneration in your local area.

b What do you think Pope Francis means when he writes:
So, when we speak of 'sustainable use', consideration must always be given to each ecosystem's regenerative ability in its different areas and aspects. (no. 140)

c How is it possible to have authentic and reliable 'sustainable use'? Provide examples to support your claims.

7 Read the following quote from Chapter 4:
Today, the analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others and to the environment. There is an interrelation between ecosystems and between the various spheres of social interaction, demonstrating yet again that 'the whole is greater than the part'. (no. 141)

a Within the context of the quote, what is meant by 'the whole is greater than the part'?

b How can there be effective interrelations between ecosystems and society?

c While much work has been done in the area of sustainable living, conduct some research to find examples of successful long-term sustainable communities and discover why they have worked and others have failed.

Chapters 5 and 6, the 'Act' section, make suggestions for both individual and collective actions to address the ecological crisis, which impacts first and foremost on the poorest of the poor. In this section, Pope Francis calls people to an ecological conversion, recommending a way of understanding and living out relationships with God, creation and other people. The ecological spirituality Pope Francis speaks about encourages people to find joy and peace in a simpler life. He also encourages people to see the essential role of politics at the local, national and international level. He challenges politicians to make courageous decisions that will outlast government and to implement political solutions related to climate change and environmental protections. *Laudato Si'* calls everyone to conversation and dialogue in order to 'regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world and that being good and decent are worth it' (no. 229).

Laudato Si' is more than words on a page – it challenges everyone to take seriously the environmental challenge and to hear 'the poor and earth crying out' and to take individual and collective action to address the ecological crisis.

ACTIVITY 3.11

1 Chapter 5 outlines Pope Francis' ideas on the dialogue needed between countries to bring about global care of the planet. He notes:
The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro is worth mentioning. It proclaimed that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. (no. 126)

Echoing the 1972 Stockholm Declaration, it enshrined international cooperation to care for the ecosystem of the entire earth. (no. 167)

Conduct some research to discover what were the motivation and outcomes of the 1972 Stockholm Declaration and the 1992 Earth Summit events. As well, discover if there have been any subsequent summits or declarations on the care of the earth.

2 Pope Francis also notes in Chapter 5:
Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most. The Conference of the United Nations on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 (Rio de Janeiro 2012), issued a wide-ranging but ineffectual outcome document. (no. 169)

a Why do you think Pope Francis says that the reduction of greenhouse gases requires 'honesty, courage and responsibility'?

b Look up the reference to the conference in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 and conduct research to find out why Pope Francis thinks the document was 'wide-ranging, but ineffectual' in its outcomes.

3 In the opening section of Chapter 6, Pope Francis writes:
Compulsive consumerism is one example of how the techno-economic paradigm affects individuals. Romano Guardini had already foreseen this: 'The gadgets and technics forced upon him by the patterns of machine production and of abstract planning mass man accepts quite simply; they are the forms of life itself'. (no. 203)

a What is meant by the term 'compulsive consumerism'?

b What is meant by 'techno-economic paradigm'?

c Do you think these are effective terms for Pope Francis to use in a chapter on 'Towards a New Lifestyle'?

d Who is Romano Guardini? What is his theory about contemporary living?

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 3.11 continued

4 In Chapter 6, Pope Francis writes:

The Earth Charter asked us to leave behind a period of self-destruction and make a new start, but we have not as yet developed a universal awareness needed to achieve this. Here, I would echo that courageous challenge: As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning … Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life. (no. 207)

a What is the 'Earth Charter' and why would Pope Francis make mention of it in the encyclical?

b How do you think Pope Francis envisages a 'new start' in the history of the planet?

5 In the closing section of Chapter 6, Pope Francis notes that the sacraments of the Catholic Church incorporate 'water, oil, fire and colours' (no. 235), elements that are found in the natural world and used with reverence within Catholic Church celebrations.

a Why do you think Pope Francis wished to make this connection to the sacraments through these elements?

b Why do you think the Church has incorporated these symbols into the sacraments? What link is there to the environment?

3.5 Conclusion

The social encyclicals of the Catholic Church challenge people to link their faith life to action for justice for all. The documents pay particular attention to the social dimensions of life, especially problems that need urgent attention from the whole of the community. Thomas Merton and Joan Chittister are people whose lives exemplify the presence of God in the world and whose actions and writings challenge people, including the hierarchy of the Church, to live in such a way that the spiritual life makes a real difference in the world and for the world.

▲ **Figure 3.9** The Catholic Church challenges people to link their faith with actions for justice.

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End of Strand Activities

Old Testament

1. Your local primary school has requested that your school provide an overview of the Old Testament aimed at middle primary students, to assist them in knowing the key aspects of the many books of the Old Testament.

   Your class is the first to begin this task and you are, therefore, able to select from the entire Old Testament. Students may work in pairs and will select a book from the list provided by the teacher or one reached by class consensus. You must:

   - Familiarise yourself with the text.
   - Research the text and ask appropriate 'behind and of' questions to enable you to discern what are the most important messages of your chosen text. Record the questions and the answers you find.
   - Locate and read several biblical commentaries to broaden your knowledge and understanding of the text. Use your research skills to access a variety of sources of information.
   - Produce a slide presentation of between five and seven slides that highlight and capture the essence of the book for a primary school audience. This slide presentation could be utilised by a teacher to assist students in their classroom learning or turned into a booklet for students to access.
   - Keep detailed notes of your research process and include a bibliography.

2. Your school wants to put together an anthology of traditional and contemporary prayers and songs focused on thanksgiving and praise for use in liturgy and prayer. You must contribute six texts to this anthology, three of which should be psalms and three of which should be contemporary poetry or song. Your three chosen psalms should be either psalms of thanksgiving or praise, and your three contemporary texts should be consistent with these themes.

   For each of your six texts, you need to write a brief (200 to 250 words) justification as to why these texts are appropriate. Within your justification, include direct evidence from each of your texts to support your choices.

3. The Books of Ruth and Esther have in contemporary times been interpreted in many different forms. There have been paintings, movies and children's animated stories retelling the stories of these two women. Locate a contemporary expression of one of the stories. Using the three worlds of the text (behind, of and in front), identify the extent to which the contemporary expression is a faithful interpretation of the biblical text. Your response should be between 450 and 500 words, and contain scripture excerpts to support your argument.

New Testament

1. The Gospel of John incorporates stories of Jesus' relationship with significant women. The roles and relationships of women are often overlooked in the Bible and, traditionally, the importance of women and the roles they play may have been disregarded and underappreciated.

   The 'in front of the text' lens that employs a feminist approach aims to uncover the feminist perspective. Your task is to select one of the texts in John's gospel listed below.

   a. You are to create a series of questions to open the text up to a feminist perspective. You may work in pairs to conduct research and find out what is occurring 'behind the text' regarding women's roles and their relationship with men at the time of Jesus. You will need to consider: the roles women played in the home and society; their legal status; the cultural and religious expectations; women's relationships with men in their family and beyond; the tasks carried out by women, etc.

   b. When you have completed your research, work alone and rewrite the passage you have selected from the perspective of the female character. The purpose of this is to enhance the text and provide an alternative point of view. You may use creative licence in order to create a complete narrative but you must ensure you incorporate historical and culturally accurate depictions.

The first miracle in John's gospel (the miracle at the wedding in Cana, 2:1–11) that occurs at a woman's initiative.
Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman in John 4:4–42.
The discussion about the woman accused of adultery in John 7:53–8:11.
The relationship between Mary, Martha and Jesus in John 11:1–44.
Women observe the death of Jesus, including its preparation (12:1–8), the crucifixion (19:25–27) and the resurrection (20:1–18).

2. Using the 'worlds of the text' approach, complete an exegesis of the well-known biblical passage, John 15:1–17. An exegesis involves drawing out different elements of the text in order to make meaning; in Greek, the term translates to 'lead out'.

   In order to answer some of the questions, you will need to access a biblical commentary. A good starting point is: https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/matthew-henry/John.15.1-John.15.27

   Set your exegesis out in the following way:

   - Provide a brief summary of the content of the story.
   - Paragraph one:
     - Who is the author and intended audience?
     - What is the time of the writing?
     - What is the setting of the passage?
   - Paragraph two:
     - What is the genre of the text? How do you know this?
     - If words are used symbolically, explain the symbolism.
     - What was the purpose or intention of the text at the time of writing?
   - Paragraph three:
     - Explain how the text is relevant for a contemporary audience.

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Christian Spiritual Writings and Wisdom

1. In the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis highlights urgent environmental and social concerns that exist in contemporary society. You are to put together a multimodal presentation that provides suggestions for how people can combat some of the concerns raised in this document. Your multimodal should include three sections:
   a. Read and summarise Chapter 1 of *Laudato Si'* highlighting some of the key issues raised by Pope Francis. This can be accessed via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7441.
   b. Use a case study to demonstrate how these concerns are evident in the world. A good case study is 'Nike: Behind the Swoosh', which you can find and view on YouTube.
   c. Suggest three practical ways that people can work to change how they treat the environment and those around them. You could allude to Catholic Social Teaching as part of your suggestions. Include video or audio footage as part of your presentation to support your points.
2. Your diocesan spirituality committee is keen to encourage people to read the works of Thomas Merton and Joan Chittister. They have asked you to develop an advertising campaign to promote spiritual reading. Select either Thomas Merton or Joan Chittister and develop a print and visual media promotion of their work. You must include the main focus of their writing and ways in which people in the parish could share the insights gained by reading their work.
3. Spiritual writings arise from an author's understanding and reflection on God. Below are three quotes from the spiritual writers mentioned in this chapter. Examine each quote, and in a written response of 450 to 500 words, explain how each quote reflects the author's understanding of the sacred texts of Catholic Christianity.
   a. 'Beware the religion that turns you against another one. It's unlikely that it's really religion at all.' Joan D. Chittister
   b. 'If in my life I fail completely to heed others, solely out of a desire to be "devout" and to perform my "religious duties", then my relationship with God will also grow arid. It becomes merely "proper", but loveless.' Pope Benedict, *Deus Caritas Est*
   c. 'The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume.' Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (no. 204)

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STRA

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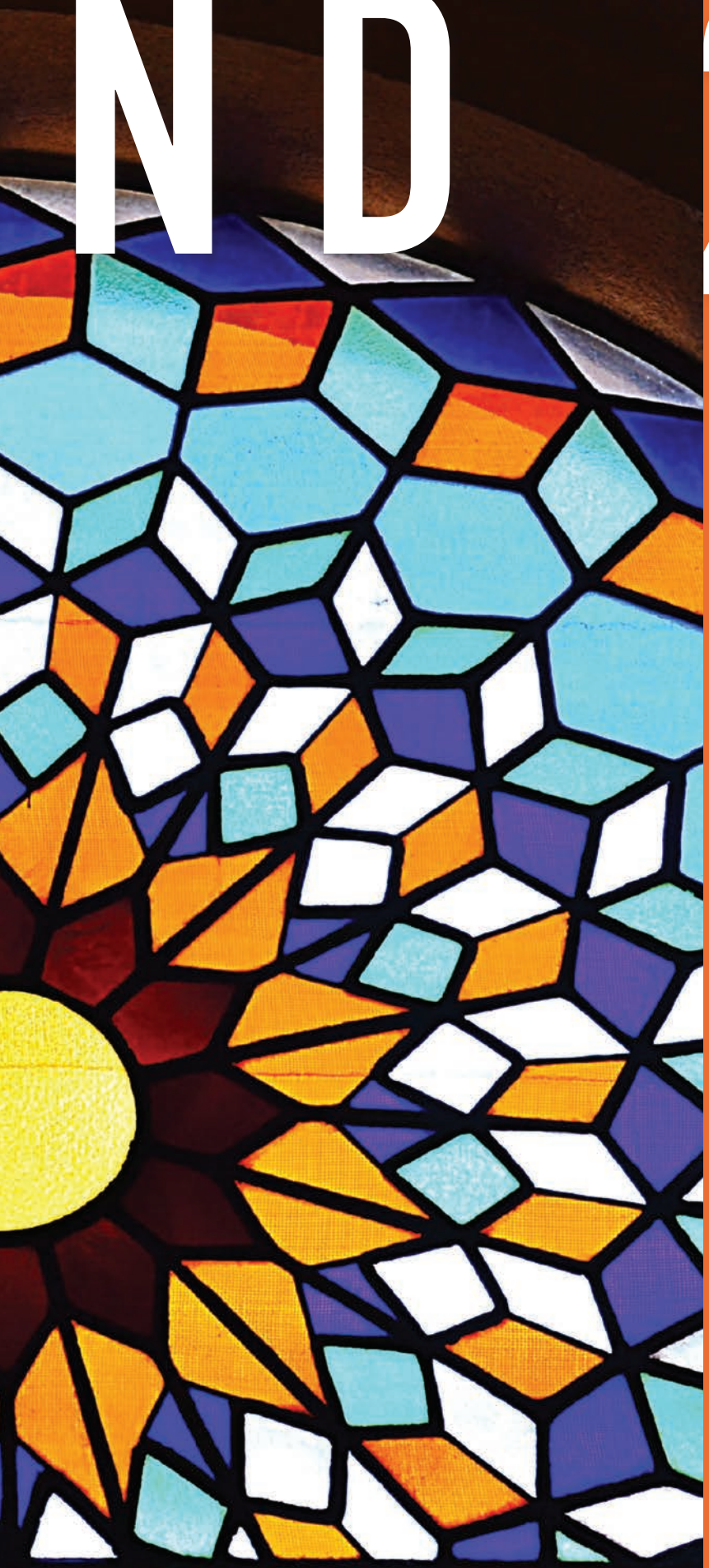

ND 2 Beliefs

In every religion there are core beliefs which make that religion unique. These beliefs are expressed in peoples' lives in a variety of ways.

The Curriculum strand, 'Beliefs', encompasses three areas:

- Beliefs
- Human Existence
- World Religions.

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CHAPTER 4

Beliefs

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Faith and belief are often confused in popular understanding and usage. They are not necessarily the same thing. Faith enlightens people so that they can see God revealed in the midst of human life. How people interpret their faith is expressed by a series of beliefs. A belief is a clear and precise articulation of a much broader commitment to faith in God. In Catholic Christianity, some of the foundational beliefs are that Jesus is both God and human; the belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist; the belief in the Assumption of Mary; and the belief in the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. In this chapter, we will explore the belief and doctrine of the Trinity and understandings of revelation.

4.1 Trinity: God, Jesus the Christ, Spirit

Christianity is a monotheistic religion that expresses belief in one God. Within the one God, there are three persons: the Father or Creator; the Son or Liberator; and the Holy Spirit or Sustainer. The mystery of the **Holy Trinity** is central to Catholic Christianity. Every time a Catholic Christian makes the Sign of the Cross or recites the Creed, s/he professes belief in the central mystery of the Trinity as a source of Christian life and faith. Prayers often begin and end with the Sign of the Cross to remind people of the importance of the Trinity.

Holy Trinity
the Father or Creator; the Son or Liberator; and the Holy Spirit or Sustainer

The Trinity is often described as one God with three persons. When we use the word 'person', we use it as if it were an analogy. In human terms, when we speak of a person we think of a unique individual, with a distinctive centre of consciousness. We cannot think of God as having three distinct centres of consciousness, because then there would be three gods. When we think of the Trinity, the persons are distinct from one another but are in relationship with each other. The Trinity, therefore, is a community of persons. The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines the Trinity in the following way: 'The Trinity is One. We do not confess three gods but one God in three persons, the "consubstantial Trinity". The divine persons do share the one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire' (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 253).

Revelation

The sacred texts of Christianity provide people with many stories that attempt to explain God. The Gospel of John reminds us that 'no one has ever seen God' (John 1:18), yet people talk *about* God and *in the name* of God. The questions that are often asked are: how do believers get their information about God and how does God communicate with people? Catholic Christians speak about God revealing God's-self to people.

The term revelation means 'unveiling'. For Catholic Christians, God is revealed or unveiled to people through a variety of things, such as creation, life events, people and, especially, the person of Jesus the Christ. The Scriptures are the main way through which God is revealed in the world. Divine revelation is central to the Old Testament and, although the Old Testament does not use the word 'revelation', the stories contained in the Old Testament describe the ways in which God revealed God's-self to the people.

4.2 God Revealed in the Old Testament

The writers of the Old Testament used literary techniques common to their time to explain how God is present in the world and in the lives of people. Some of these ancient literary techniques are theophanies, oracles and dreams. A theophany is the appearance of God to a person while an oracle, from the Greek word meaning 'to speak', is a message from God given through the words of a prophet, angel or messenger.

Abraham experienced a theophany when God appeared to him in Genesis 17:1–22:

> 1When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. 2And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' 3Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 4'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. 5No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. 6I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. 7I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. 8And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God.'
>
> 9God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. 10This is my covenant, which you shall

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▲ **Figure 4.1** Russian icon depicting the three angels who visited Abraham at Mamre, also interpreted as an icon of the Trinity

keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. [11]You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. [12]Throughout your generations every male among you shall be circumcised when he is eight days old, including the slave born in your house and the one bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring. [13]Both the slave born in your house and the one bought with your money must be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. [14]Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.'

[15]God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. [16]I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.' [17]Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, 'Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?' [18]And Abraham said to God, 'O that Ishmael might live in your sight!' [19]God said, 'No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. [20]As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. [21]But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year.' [22]And when he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

ACTIVITY 4.1

1. Explain in your own words the theophany of God to Abraham.
2. God also appears to Isaac and Jacob. Copy the table below, then summarise in your own words the theophanies presented in the following texts.

Biblical reference	Summary of theophany
Genesis 26:2	
Genesis 32:25–31	
Genesis 35:9	

God is also revealed to the people of Israel in dreams, as shown in this extract from Genesis where God speaks to Jacob in a dream.

[10]Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran. [11]He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. [12]And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. [13]And the LORD stood beside him and said, 'I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; [14]and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. [15]Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' (Genesis 28:10–15)

Joseph, the youngest son of Jacob, specialised in interpreting dreams, as shown in Genesis 40–41.

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▲ **Figure 4.2** Artist's interpretation of Jacob's ladder

ACTIVITY 4.2

Read Genesis 40–41.

1. Summarise the events in Genesis 40 in five bullet points.
2. How is the character of Joseph introduced in Genesis 40?
3. Outline the implications for Joseph when the chief cupbearer forgets him after being restored to the Pharaoh.
4. In your own words, describe the dreams of the Pharaoh in Genesis 41.
5. Interpret Joseph's reply to the Pharaoh, 'I cannot do it, but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires'.
6. Provide a definition for the word 'discerning' and explain why you think Pharaoh used it to describe Joseph.
7. Describe the central message behind Joseph's storing of grain in preparation for the famine.

ACTIVITY 4.3

Read the following biblical extracts. Copy and complete the table by selecting evidence from the text in the form of a quote to support the statement that 'throughout the Old Testament, God intervenes in history on behalf of the Chosen People'.

Biblical reference	Summary of text	Evidence
Deuteronomy 6:20–25		
Deuteronomy 26:5–10		
Joshua 24:2–13		
Exodus 15:1–18		

Throughout the Old Testament, the revelation of God is also communicated through texts showing God intervening in history. It is God who saves the people from slavery and leads them out of Egypt and safely through the Sea of Reeds.

A decisive moment in the history of revelation is the Sinai Covenant, where God became the head of the nation and delivered Israel from Egypt. In return, the people pledged fidelity to the law of God (Exodus 20:1–17).

[1]Then God spoke all these words:
[2]I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; [3]you shall have no other gods before me.

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4You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in
the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on
the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.
5You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I
the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children
for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth
generation of those who reject me, 6but showing steadfast
love to the thousandth generation of those who love me
and keep my commandments.
7You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the
LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who
misuses his name.
8Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9For
six days you shall labour and do all your work. 10But the
seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall
not do any work – you, your son or your daughter, your
male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident
in your towns. 11For in six days the LORD made heaven
and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the
seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day
and consecrated it.
12Honour your father and your mother, so that your
days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is
giving you.
13You shall not murder.
14You shall not commit adultery.
15You shall not steal.
16You shall not bear false witness against your
neighbour.
17You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you
shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female
slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your
neighbour.

The Mosaic Law outlines how obedience brings blessings and transgression brings punishment. The connection between Law and Covenant is played out through the lives of the Israelites. The words of the Law have to be taken to heart and interiorised: '… the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe' (Deuteronomy 30:14). God is revealed to the people when they keep the Law and seek God '… you will seek the LORD our God, and you find him if you search after him with all your heart and soul' (Deuteronomy 4:29).

In the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament, God is revealed to the 'wise' and the wise person is the one who fulfils the Law of God: 'Whoever fears the Lord will do this, and whoever holds to the law will obtain wisdom' (Sirach 15:1). Here the word 'fear' does not mean to be afraid, but rather to have proper respect and reverence for God. Wisdom is identified with the Word of God.

God is also revealed to people through creation in this poetry from the Book of Proverbs 8:23–31:

▲ **Figure 4.3** Artist's impression of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments

23Ages ago I was set up,
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
24When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.
25Before the mountains had been shaped,
before the hills, I was brought forth –
26when he had not yet made earth and fields,
or the world's first bits of soil.
27When he established the heavens, I was there,
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,
28when he made firm the skies above,
when he established the fountains of the deep,
29when he assigned to the sea its limit,
so that the waters might not transgress his command,
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
30then I was beside him, like a master worker;
and I was daily his delight,
rejoicing before him always,
31rejoicing in his inhabited world
and delighting in the human race.

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4.3 Mercy and Love of God

The theme of God's mercy is constant throughout both the Old and New Testaments. In fact, mercy is basic to God's nature. In the story of the burning bush in Exodus 3, God says to Moses:

> …, [7]'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, [8]and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. [9]The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. [10]So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.' [11]But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' [12]He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain'. (Exodus 3:7–12)

Not long after Moses received the Ten Commandments and before he had time to descend from Mt Sinai, the people strayed from God and began to worship a golden calf (Exodus 32).

> [1]When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron and said to him, 'Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' [2]Aaron said to them, 'Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.' [3]So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. [4]He took the gold from them, formed it in a mould, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' [5]When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD.' [6]They rose early the next day, and offered burnt-offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel. (Exodus 32:1–6)

▲ **Figure 4.4** Pilgrims at Mt Sinai

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The covenant with God is broken and everything appears to be lost. Moses, disappointed and at a loss for what to do, says to God, 'Let me see your countenance', but God responds 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy' (Exodus 33:19).

The word 'mercy' is from the Hebrew word *rachmin*, which means 'womb' or 'womb compassion'; it is love from the inside out – mercy is a relationship, not a momentary feeling. Mercy is much more than 'being nice' or 'keeping the peace' and it is more than just 'being kind'. The mercy of God is 'com-passionate': the prefix 'com' means 'with', so compassion is suffering with or standing alongside those who are hurting. Mercy opposes injustice, speaks out about degrading behaviour and requires courage. In the Book of Exodus, the mercy of God is described as having 13 attributes:

> 6The Lord, the Lord,
> a God merciful and gracious,
> slow to anger,
> and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,
> 7keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation,
> forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,
> yet by no means clearing the guilty,
> but visiting the iniquity of the parents
> upon the children
> and the children's children,
> to the third and the fourth generation. (Exodus 34:6–7)

The 13 attributes are:

1 Lord, the Lord
2 God
3 merciful and
4 gracious
5 long-suffering, and
6 abundant in
7 goodness
8 abundant in truth
9 keeping mercy unto the
10 thousandth generation (forever)
11 forgiving iniquity and
12 forgiving transgression and
13 forgiving sin.

Today, these 13 attributes are used constantly in the prayers of contemporary Jews. They sing them when the Torah is taken out of the Ark, they pray them as part of their penitential prayers on New Year's Eve and during the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). People of the Jewish faith are encouraged to embody these 13 attributes of G-d's mercy and reflect them in their actions and lifestyle because, as the Talmud says, you can only demand the mercy of G-d if you, yourself, show mercy in all your actions and relationships.

God's mercy is 'womb love' because it expresses the tender aspect of God's love, which is like the love a mother often feels for her yet-to-be-born child. This ancient story from the First Book of Kings 3:16–28 helps us to understand 'womb love'.

> 16Later, two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. 17One woman said, 'Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. 18Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. We were together; there was no one else with us in the house, only the two of us were in the house. 19Then this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. 20She got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your servant slept. She laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. 21When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, I saw that he was dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, clearly it was not the son I had borne.' 22But the other woman said, 'No, the living son is mine, and the dead son is yours.' The first said, 'No, the dead son is yours, and the living son is mine.' So they argued before the king.
>
> 23Then the king said, 'One says, "This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead"; while the other says, "Not so! Your son is dead, and my son is the living one."' 24So the king said, 'Bring me a sword', and they brought a sword before the king. 25The king said, 'Divide the living boy in two; then give half to one, and half to the other.' But the woman whose son was alive said to the king – because compassion for her son burned within her – 'Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!' The other said, 'It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it.' 27Then the king responded: 'Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother.' 28All Israel heard of the judgement that the king had rendered; and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice.

King Solomon does not judge between the two women, nor does he take sides in the struggle for possession of the child. Instead, he repeats what the women have said to show that no solution is possible:

> 23'One says, "This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead"; while the other says, "Not so! Your son is dead, and my son is the living one."' (1 Kings 3:23)

At this point in the story, the king moves to break the dualistic thinking of 'mine' versus 'yours' by saying: '"Bring me a sword", … "Divide the living boy in two; then give half to one, and half to the other"' (Kings 3:25).

This order forces the truth to be disclosed. In responding to the king's command, the women judge themselves.

> But the woman whose son was alive said to the king – because compassion for her son burned within her –

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> 'Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!' The other said, 'It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it.' (1 Kings 3:26)

Having allowed the women to reveal who they are and hence to decide their own case, the king need only report the verdict: 'Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother' (1 Kings 3:27).

Let us pay particular attention to the Hebrew words used in verse 26: 'But the woman whose son was alive said to the king – because compassion [*rachmim* = mercy] for her son burned within her – "Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!"'. Motivated by *rachmim*, the woman forgoes justice for the sake of the life of her child. The mother demonstrates 'womb love', which ultimately brings truth and life.

Even though the womb is a female organ, the biblical metaphor has also been applied to men. Recall the story of Joseph and his brothers in the book of Genesis. In this story, Joseph is thrown into a well by his brothers and then sold into slavery. Years later, when Joseph has risen in power and is an adviser to the Pharaoh, there is an influx of people from Israel into Egypt because of a famine. After many years of not having seen his brothers, Joseph sees for the first time his brother Benjamin: '… With that, Joseph hurried out, because he was overcome with affection [*rachmim*/womb compassion] for his brother, and he was about to weep. So he went into a private room and wept there' (Genesis 43:30). *Rachmim*, womb compassion, expresses all aspects of God's love.

Throughout the Old Testament, God is often referred to by the two adjectives 'merciful' and 'compassionate'. In these instances, the Hebrew word *hesed* is used, which translates as 'steadfast love' or 'loving kindness'. The prophet Isaiah (54:10) says:

> [10]For the mountains may depart
> and the hills be removed,
> but my steadfast love [*hesed*] shall not depart from you,
> and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,
> says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

Hesed is not primarily something people 'feel', but rather something people 'do' for others who have no claim on them. *Hesed* is a love that is enduring, a love that persists.

▲ **Figure 4.5** Artist's interpretation of King Solomon suggesting the child be cut in half

4.4 God Revealed in the New Testament

God is revealed in the words of scripture, in history and in the religious experience of the people. God's revelation is continued in the New Testament and is particularly evident in the life and actions of Jesus the Christ. The New Testament writers echo the Old Testament understanding of the mercy of God and the belief that this mercy is inexhaustible, as stated in Ephesians 2:4–10:

> [4]But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us [5]even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – [6]and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7]so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. [8]For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – [9]not the result of works, so that no one may boast. [10]For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

In the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke), Jesus the Christ is the one who reveals God by proclaiming the Good News and teaching the Word of God: 'Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news"' (Mark 1:14–15). The apostles are commissioned by Jesus to pass on what they heard from him

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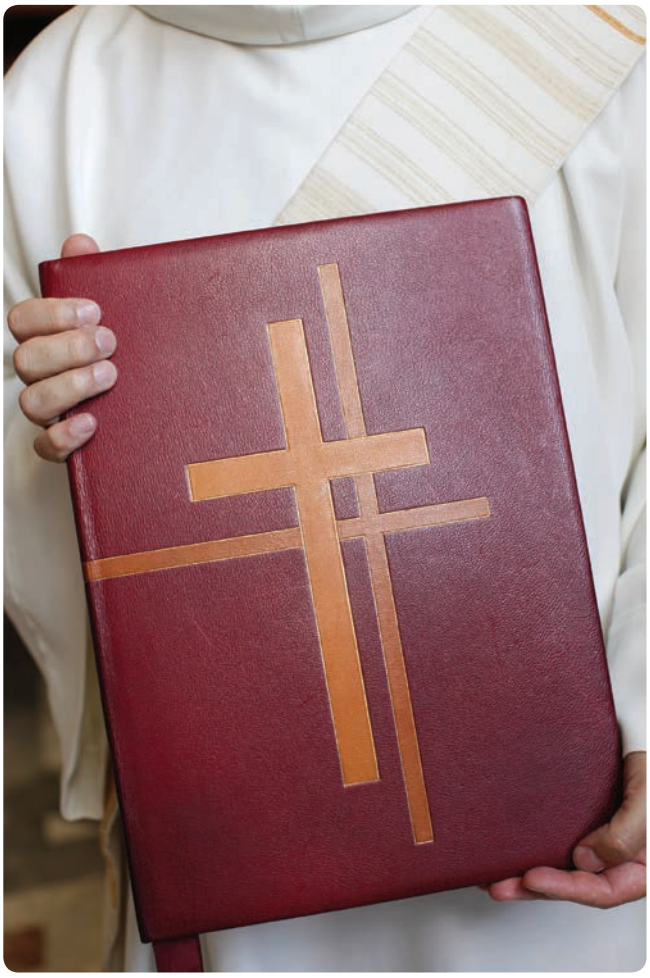

▲ **Figure 4.6** The New Testament reveals the Word of God.

and what they have seen: '… he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message' (Mark 3:14) and to invite women and men to accept the message of faith: '… "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned" ' (Mark 16:15–16).

In the New Testament, God's mercy and steadfast love are exemplified through the life of Jesus. When Jesus speaks of mercy, he speaks as a Jew whose deep knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures influences every fibre of his being. Jesus embodies the very mercy and compassion of the God of Israel. When we read and listen to the stories of Jesus, they are best understood through the lens of 1st-century Judaism – we need to listen with Jewish ears and read with Jewish eyes in order to fully appreciate the link Jesus makes with the Hebrew Scriptures.

In the Gospel of Luke, when Jesus is asked by the lawyer 'who is my neighbour?', he tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. The description, 'good Samaritan', has become synonymous with people who do good deeds and 'Good Samaritan' has become part of everyday language, but the everyday usage of the title 'Good Samaritan' has dulled the impact of the parable.

At the time of the gospels, the Samaritans lived in the area between Galilee and Judea. They were a racially mixed society and their religious beliefs were different from the Jews. Samaritans only accepted the first five books of scripture (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) and their temple was on Mt Gerizim, not on Mt Zion in Jerusalem. Because they had pagan heritage and did not adhere to the full laws of Judaism, the Samaritans were despised by ordinary Jews. Rather than contaminate themselves by passing through Samaria, Jews would cross over the River Jordan and bypass Samaria.

The contemporary interpretation of the Good Samaritan as a charitable stranger is not the message a 1st-century Jewish audience would have heard. For them, it was not about looking after a fellow human being. It was much more provocative than that. The lawyer's question, 'Who is my neighbour?', is really a polite question about 'who is not my neighbour?' According to Leviticus 19, love has to extend beyond the person's immediate family and clan to love of the stranger as well. Verses 17–18 state:

> [17]You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself. [18]You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD.

So love is not just about love of family, but love of others, including strangers. The lawyer is really asking, 'Who does not deserve my love? Whom can I hate?' Jesus responds: 'no one' because everyone deserves love, locals or aliens, Jews or Gentiles – everyone. In Jewish thought, one could not mistreat the enemy, but love was not mandated. Proverbs 25:21 says 'If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat; and if they are thirsty give them water to drink'. Jesus insists on loving the enemy: 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you' (Matthew 5:44).

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the traveller is stripped, beaten and left to die in a ditch. He is robbed not only of his possessions, but also of his dignity, his health and almost his life. Contemporary readers need to be cautious about stereotypes when interpreting this parable. Often the claim is made that the Priest and Levite pass by the half-dead man because they are afraid of being contaminated by the corpse and violating purity laws. Such claims about uncleanness or purity are made by modern Christians, but were not made by Jesus or Luke. In the laws of Judaism, there is nothing impure about touching a person who is 'half dead'. Nor is it a sin to bury a corpse: in fact, the Torah requires that a corpse be interred. What the law required

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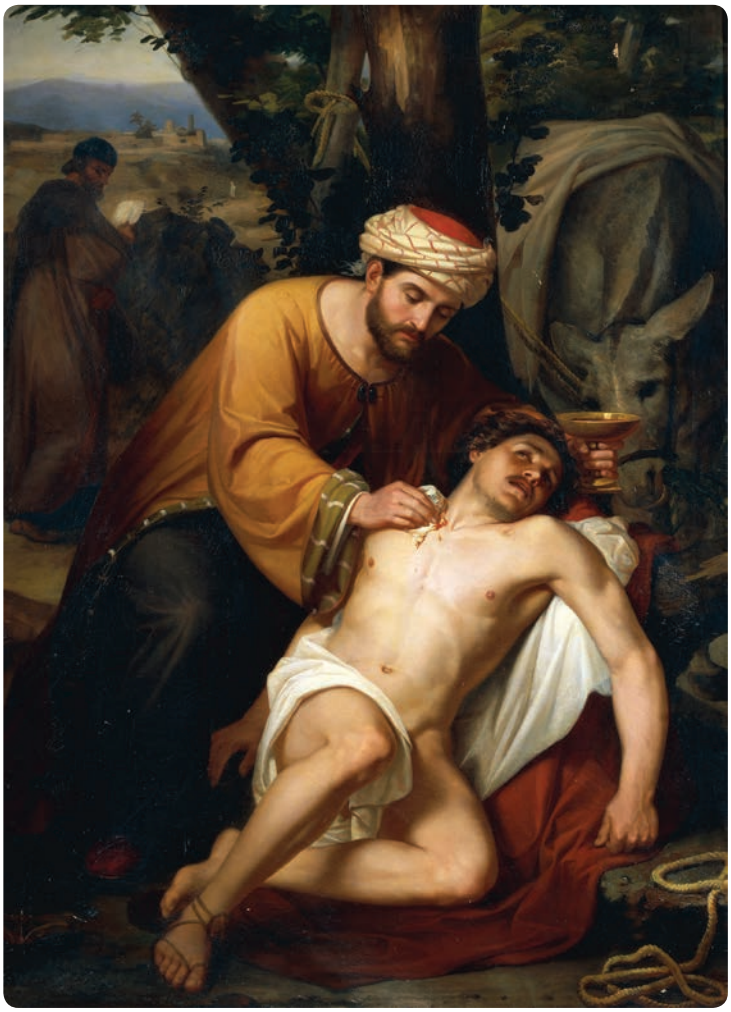

▲ **Figure 4.7** Artist's impression of the parable of the Good Samaritan

of both men is that they should stop and attend to the man in the ditch whether he be alive or dead because they are required to 'love the neighbour' and 'love the stranger'. Their responsibility was to save the man's life – but they did not stop, perhaps because they were afraid that they, too, would be attacked. They were thinking only of themselves and were not thinking about the man in the ditch.

For 1st-century Jews, many familiar stories were about three people, so they would have been expecting to hear a certain combination of three types of people. They were expecting to hear the combination of a Priest, a Levite and an Israelite. So, if the first two people from within the hierarchy of Judaism did not stop, they would have expected that the ordinary, everyday Israelite would stop to help. The 1st-century Jewish audience was shocked to hear that the third person in this parable was a Samaritan. In the telling of the parable, Jesus overturns the accepted pattern of three by the third person being a Samaritan – the enemy of the Jews. Most 1st-century Jewish listeners would have been uncomfortable hearing that a Samaritan stopped to help, and that a Samaritan – an enemy – showed the man great mercy.

The lawyer asks Jesus, 'Who is my neighbour?' Jesus, however, reframes the question: the issue for Jesus is not 'who' but 'what'; not the identity of the person but the action of the person. The lawyer, not even able to speak the name 'Samaritan', says 'The one doing mercy for him'. The parable of the Good Samaritan is about compassion and mercy. For the lawyer and for Luke's audience, the Samaritan does what God does in showing mercy and compassion. The divine is manifested through action. The challenge in the final statement of the parable comes from Jesus when he says: 'Go and do likewise'.

ACTIVITY 4.4

1. Think about this new interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan and the concepts of mercy and compassion outlined in this section. Take a few moments to reflect, using the three Rs as your focus.
   - Resonance – what have you heard that rings true for you?
   - Resistance – is there something that you did not want to hear or that made you uncomfortable?
   - Realignment – as a result of what you have heard, has something shifted in you? What is different?
2. Read the following biblical passages that reveal the mercy and compassion of God: Isaiah 49:1–7; Isaiah 49:8–13; Ephesians 2:4–10; 1 John 4:4–12.
   Use the TEL-Con pattern to help you construct a structured paragraph of 150 to 200 words that formulates a hypothesis about the mercy and compassion of God as described in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

A TEL-Con pattern consists of: a topic sentence followed by first evidence or example, then a link sentence to a second example or evidence sentence, followed by a link sentence to a third example or evidence sentence, then a link sentence to the concluding sentence.

Topic sentence outlines what the paragraph is about.

Example or Evidence Sentence provides concrete evidence to support your topic sentence.

Link sentence says why your example or evidence supports your topic sentence.

Concluding sentence finalises the idea or 'recaps' what you are saying.

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4.5 Conclusion

God is revealed to people through the words of scripture, the natural world, people and especially Jesus the Christ. In turn, Catholic Christians are encouraged to reveal God to others through their daily living, especially through their words, thoughts and actions. Exercising compassion, mercy and acts of justice are ways in which Catholic Christians demonstrate the presence of God in their lives as well as revealing God to others.

▲ **Figure 4.8** God is revealed through scripture, the natural world, people and Jesus the Christ.

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CHAPTER 5

Human Existence

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For centuries, Christians have spoken about the 'mystery of God'. A mystery is something that we cannot *fully* or *wholly* understand, rather than something we cannot know at all. Mystery presents people with an invitation to explore, know and understand more deeply. Christians believe that the mystery of God is present in their lives, that it is something that can be experienced and with which they are in touch. Catholic Christians come to an understanding of God through their experience of the created world, the experiences of their lives and also through the sacred texts of Christianity, as well as the traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Because God is a mystery, and is so much greater than we can comprehend, it is difficult to describe God fully using human language, concepts and stories. Part of the mystery of God is explained by using descriptions of transcendence and immanence. Transcendence refers to the 'otherness' of God who is 'beyond' the world and human understanding. Immanence, from the Latin word meaning to 'remain in', indicates that God also remains in creation and, therefore, is present everywhere through the acts of continuing creation. So God, as pure spirit transcending all of creation, is simultaneously in the world and beyond the world and so is both knowable and unknowable.

▲ **Figure 5.1** Catholic Christians come to an understanding of God through their experience of the created world.

5.1 Understandings of God in Scripture

At the very beginning of the Book of Genesis, two sacred myths that tell how the world was created from a religious (not scientific) view provide some understanding of God. These two accounts of creation present very different understandings of God. The first creation account presents God as being **transcendent** and the second creation account presents God as being **immanent**.

transcendent
the 'otherness' of God, who is 'above' and 'beyond' the world and human understanding

immanent
God 'remains in' creation. God is present everywhere by the ongoing acts of creation.

In the first Genesis creation account, Genesis 1:1–2:4a, the all-powerful and almighty God creates an ordered and beautiful world from a turbulent chaos, a 'formless void'. This creation account highlights the goodness of God, the goodness of creation and the desire of God that human beings share in that goodness. God is so powerful that by merely

Sacred myth is a timeless, sacred story that attempts to explain how God interacts with people and the world. A sacred myth presents religious truth. Myths are more than stories because they reflect the universal concerns of people throughout history.

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uttering the words '… let there be …' light and darkness, water and dry land, sun, moon and stars, fish and birds, animals and human beings are all created through the action and power of God.

In the ancient Near East, people understood God as presiding over an assembly of heavenly beings who deliberated and decided about matters on earth. We can see examples of this in texts such as:

> 8 Then I heard the voice of the LORD saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)

> 1 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy splendour. (Psalm 29:1–2)

> 6 One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD. (Job 1:6)

This idea of God as '**presider**' is also presented in Genesis 1:26, where we read, 'Then God said: Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness'. The description of humankind in Genesis 1:26 as being in the 'image of God' expresses the worth of human beings who have value in themselves. God also gives sexuality to human beings to love and respect each other and to reflect their 'god-like' qualities in all they do and say. The predominant image of God presented in the first Genesis creation account is a God who is 'other', beyond the imaginings of the world and utterly transcendent.

A very different image of God is presented in the second Genesis creation account, Genesis 2:4b–25. In this account, God is portrayed as a potter who moulds the human body from the earth (in Hebrew, *adamah*). In Genesis 2, the authors use a clever play on Hebrew words. The two words are: *adamah* meaning 'the earth' and *adam* meaning 'the creature made out of the earth'.

> 7 then the LORD God formed man [*adam*] from the dust of the ground [*adamah*], and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; (Genesis 2:7)

When the passage is translated using the transliterated Hebrew words we read: 'God formed the earth-creature from the dust of the earth and breathed into the earth creature'. Later the 'earth creature' is divided into male (*ish*) and female (*ishah*). The language used does not imply that the woman is subordinate to the male; rather, the language provides a profound equality and affinity between man and woman and a relationship that is supportive and nurturing.

In this sacred creation myth, God is anthropomorphised. The word anthropomorphism comes from two Greek words, *anthropos* meaning 'human' and *morphe* meaning 'form'. In Genesis 2, the authors have described God as having human qualities and characteristics as a means of assisting people to understand who God is. When we **anthropomorphise** God, we attribute things that would be considered perfection in a human being to God. As humans, we filter things through our own experience, and we relate to having a body, so when people think of God it is only natural to describe God in human terms as being 'like us'.

anthropomorphise to ascribe human qualities or features

presider one who occupies a place of authority

Certain things are beyond human ability to grasp and we cannot comprehend them in their entirety; for instance, we can see things, but we cannot see an infinite distance. Some things are unknowable and so the biblical authors used metaphors as descriptions for God. We read of God's actions, emotions and appearance in human terms, or at least in words that we normally accept and associate with humans. They portray God as walking in the garden, God sitting in the heavens and God speaking, feeling, hearing and acting.

Anthropomorphisms are helpful in enabling people to partially comprehend the incomprehensible, to know the unknowable and to fathom the unfathomable, but

▼ **Figure 5.2** The image of the potter is used as a metaphor for God.

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we need to be careful not to limit God in any way or to diminish and reduce the power, love and mercy of God. As much as anthropomorphisms help us to imagine God, it is also helpful to reflect on these verses from the Book of Isaiah 55:8–9, which speaks about God:

> 8For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
> nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
> 9For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
> so are my ways higher than your ways
> and my thoughts than your thoughts.

ACTIVITY 5.1

The following extracts are examples of anthropomorphisms. Read the extracts, then copy and complete the table by identifying the human characteristics ascribed to God and then explain the meanings of the anthropomorphisms.

Biblical reference	Anthropomorphism	Meaning
Leviticus 20:6	'set my face against them'	To oppose someone or thing
Numbers 6:25		
Isaiah 23:11		
Psalm 113:6		
Deuteronomy 11:12		
Judges 2:18		
Exodus 32:14		
2 Samuel 24:16		

5.2 Metaphoric Images of God

The Bible provides many metaphoric images of God. A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one thing is identified as another; for example, 'he is a lion in the fight'. Common metaphors for God include: God is a shepherd who leads the flock along the right path (Psalm 23); and the shepherd who seeks the lost (Ezekiel 34:16). God is also a mother who never forgets the child of her womb (Isaiah 49:15), and the mother eagle who cares for her offspring and teaches them to fly (Deuteronomy 32:11). God is a parent (Hosea 11:1–4) and a gracious host who prepares a table and anoints guests with oil (Psalm 23:5). Every metaphor for God is only partial and inadequate in that only some small aspect of God is illuminated in the metaphor.

Over time, many metaphors for God have become literalised. For instance, rather than recognising that God is *like* a father, people have confined God to being male and a father to the exclusion of other metaphors. People have forgotten that God is both like and unlike whatever human terms are used to speak about God.

Human language is the product of human experience and, therefore, it cannot adequately express the mystery that is God because God is beyond all human experience. When we

▲ **Figure 5.3** Every metaphor or image of God is partial and inadequate.

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use human language to speak about God we use analogies. We look at what we know and experience and say God is like this. We say God is good, or God is just, or God is loving.

All language about God is analogical and symbolic. Even though we know that God is not a person, we describe God as having personal characteristics. We also understand God to be someone we can know and love. We can only call God a 'person' because of our understanding of human persons. When we say God is a 'person', after the analogy of a human person, we mean that God can communicate with us, relate to us and we can do the same with God. The depth of God's being and essence is always beyond our full expression and comprehension.

The American theologian, Sallie McFague, encourages people to use a multiplicity of images and metaphors to enhance their image of God. When talking about ecological issues, she encourages people to care for the earth as if it were God's 'body'. She says that if we imagine the cosmos as God's body, then we would do all in our power to protect the environment. If we think of the metaphor of the earth as if it were God's 'body', then the entire universe is expressive of God's being. McFague's image of God may appear to be radical, but it has roots in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the mystical traditions of Christianity. McFague reminds people to deconstruct images of God and to reconstruct images and metaphors so that new and powerful images present something of the way God is present in the world.

Throughout history, various images of God have been developed. St Augustine of Hippo (354–430 CE), a 4th-century theologian and philosopher, provides another image of God in his book *The Confessions*.

> Late have I loved you, O beauty so ancient and so new; late have I loved you! … You called and cried to me and broke upon my deafness; and you sent forth your beam and shone upon me, and chased away my blindness; you breathed fragrance upon me, and I drew in my breath and do not pant for you; I tasted you and I now hunger and thirst for you; you touched me and I now burned for your peace.

St Teresa of Avila (1515–82), a Spanish mystic, theologian and Carmelite nun, described her relationship and understanding of God in the following way:

> For though we know quite well that God is present in all that we do, our nature is such that it makes us lose sight of the fact; but when this favour is granted it can no longer do so, for the Lord, who is near at hand, awakens it. And even the favours aforementioned occur much more commonly, as the soul experiences a vivid and almost constant love for God whom it sees or knows to be at its side. (from *The Interior Castle*)

St Teresa describes the action of God in the world as being through people:

> Christ has no body but yours,
> No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
> Yours are the eyes with which he looks
> compassion on this world,
> Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
> Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
> Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
> Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
> Christ has no body now but yours,
> No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
> Yours are the eyes with which he looks
> compassion on this world.
> Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

▲ **Figure 5.4** St Teresa of Avila

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ACTIVITY 5.2

1. St Teresa's poem is effective because it speaks to individuals and invites a personal relationship with God. Collect and print several photographs of yourself. Using the photos and the words of the poem, create a collage that enables the poem to become a personal link between yourself and God.
2. Write your own prayer, describing the revelation and action of God through the metaphor of a garden. Decide what aspects of the garden you will include and the various aspects of God they will represent. Decorate your created prayer with images and colour so that it is something you could display in a classroom.

It can be helpful to identify what your dominant image of God is, because it provides you with clues to understanding why you order your life in a certain way and how your belief in God affects the way you live. The image people have of God shapes the way they pray, the way they approach God, the way they understand God and the way they understand themselves. It could also be helpful to consider whether your image of God changes depending on your state of being; for example, whether you are happy or sad or in need of assistance.

5.3 Knowing God

While we cannot wholly know God, there is much that we can know. In order to speak of God and to describe God we need a language that lifts people beyond the ordinary or the mundane and points to the transcendent. Often the language used is full of symbols and metaphor.

The poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, wrote, 'The world is charged with the grandeur of God'.

ACTIVITY 5.3

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

1. Research Gerard Manley Hopkins to find some basic biographical information about him and his life: who was he; what was his occupation; when did he live; where did he live? How important is his contribution to literature?
2. Hopkins' poem is a sonnet and follows a predictable pattern. The first section, called an octave (eight lines), is divided into two sections. Look for a pattern in the rhyme of the last words in each line. If we call the first line 'a' and the second 'b', complete the pattern for the octave.
   a. Consider the opening line, what does being 'charged with . . .' mean in this context?
   b. Lines two and three start with 'it', referring to God's grandeur. What do the lines state about God's grandeur? What images are created in these lines?
   c. Lines two and three are seen as evidence, or proof, of God's greatness. What is Hopkins asking about people (men) in line four?
   d. The second four lines (quatrain) shift the focus onto humanity and the ongoing relentlessness of labour. What is the impact of repeating the word 'trod'? What is being destroyed by being trodden on? How might this relate to people's relationships with God and nature?
   e. The last line refers to 'being shod', which means wearing shoes. Why do you think Hopkins is suggesting this is a negative thing? What does wearing shoes not allow people to do?
3. The second stanza of the poem is in the form of a sestet, which is six lines with a different rhyming pattern. Try to identify the pattern, looking at the rhyme of the last words in each line.
   a. In the first line, Hopkins suggests that nature does not give up, despite people neglecting it. Is he just referring to leaves and trees when he refers to nature or is he referring to something more? State your position and explain why you believe it.

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 5.3 continued

b What is the significance of morning and the determination and predictability in each new day?

c Hopkins' tone is optimistic and hopeful, suggesting that the 'freshness' is about God's capacity to renew people through God's generosity in nature. Study the sestet to look for evidence that supports this idea.

d The imagery of a bird is used effectively in the last line. Explain what is occurring and how God is depicted as triumphant.

4 Poetry critics suggest that ultimately this poem is a celebration of God's greatness and unrelenting presence in the world. To what extent do you agree with this statement? Write a paragraph stating and justifying your position, using evidence from the poem to support your ideas.

▲ **Figure 5.5** Some people experience God within creation.

Francis Thompson, in his poem 'The Hound of Heaven' (1893), describes his own flight from God and how God, the hound of heaven, pursued him with the deliberate speed and majestic instinct of a pursuing hound.

I FLED Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat – and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet –
'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.'

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ACTIVITY 5.4

In 1981, the rock band Horrendous Disc recorded a song called 'Hound of Heaven'. Using your preferred search engine, find and listen to 'Hound of Heaven' being performed by the band. Alternatively, you can read the words of the song below.

He got lost among the stars
Hollywood flash, cash, mansions and cars
Deep-sea diver, Lear-jet flyer
Will this thing go to the moon?
Give me elbow room, and for heaven's sake
Take this aching away

You can't run, you can't hide, from the hound of heaven
You're free to choose, can you refuse the seeker of souls

Hobo sleeping alone in a dirty box car
He dreams of sailing to a tropical island
One sweet day the thrill awakes him
There's no sunshine
This old train ain't really going there
Now does anybody care, and for heaven's sake
Take this aching away
You can't run, you can't hide, from the hound of heaven
You're free to choose, can you refuse the seeker of souls

We got lost among the stars
Hollywood flash, cash, mansions and cars
Deep-sea diver, Lear-jet flyer
Will this thing go to the moon?
Give me elbow room, and for heaven's sake
Take this aching away

You can't run, you can't hide, from the hound of heaven
You're free to choose, can you refuse the seeker of souls

You can't run, you can't hide, from the hound of heaven
You're free to choose, can you refuse the seeker of souls

1. Who or what does the 'Hound of Heaven' refer to in the lyrics? How is this same image created in the poem?
2. Why are people trying to escape or evade the Hound of Heaven? What is it they choose to follow or pursue in both the song and poem? Why is the alternative more appealing?
3. What message does the poem give about the individual being pursued and the pursuer? Give evidence to support your claims.
4. What are both the poem and song lyrics suggesting is wrong with the 'modern' world? If you were to write an updated version, what distractions and diversions would you focus on in the 21st century? How would you portray the Hound of Heaven?

5.4 God in the Visual Arts

God is not only revealed through the words of scripture, but something of God is also revealed through the arts, especially the visual arts. For centuries, Jewish and Christian artists avoided depicting God in human form. Instead, an artistic metaphor or symbol of a hand emerging from a cloud was used to indicate the presence of God.

One early image that used the symbol of a hand emerging from the sky was uncovered in Israel in 1928. The image was a mosaic on the floor of a synagogue. The mosaics at Beth Alpha synagogue are unique in that they combine religious and secular imagery. One of the most fascinating features of the mosaics is the retelling of the story of the binding of Isaac from Genesis 22:1–18.

[1]After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him,
'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' [2]He said, 'Take your
son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the
land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering
on one of the mountains that I shall show you.' [3]So
Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey,
and took two of his young men with him, and his son
Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out
and went to the place in the distance that God had shown
him. [4]On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the
place far away. [5]Then Abraham said to his young men,
'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over
there; we will worship, and then we will come back to
you.' [6]Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and
laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and
the knife. So the two of them walked on together. [7]Isaac
said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And he said, 'Here I
am, my son.' He said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but
where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?' [8]Abraham said,
'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering,
my son.' So the two of them walked on together.
[9]When they came to the place that God had shown
him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in
order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar,
on top of the wood. [10]Then Abraham reached out his
hand and took the knife to kill his son. [11]But the angel of
the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham,
Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' [12]He said, 'Do not
lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now
I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld

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your son, your only son, from me.' [13]And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son. [14]So Abraham called that place 'The LORD will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.'

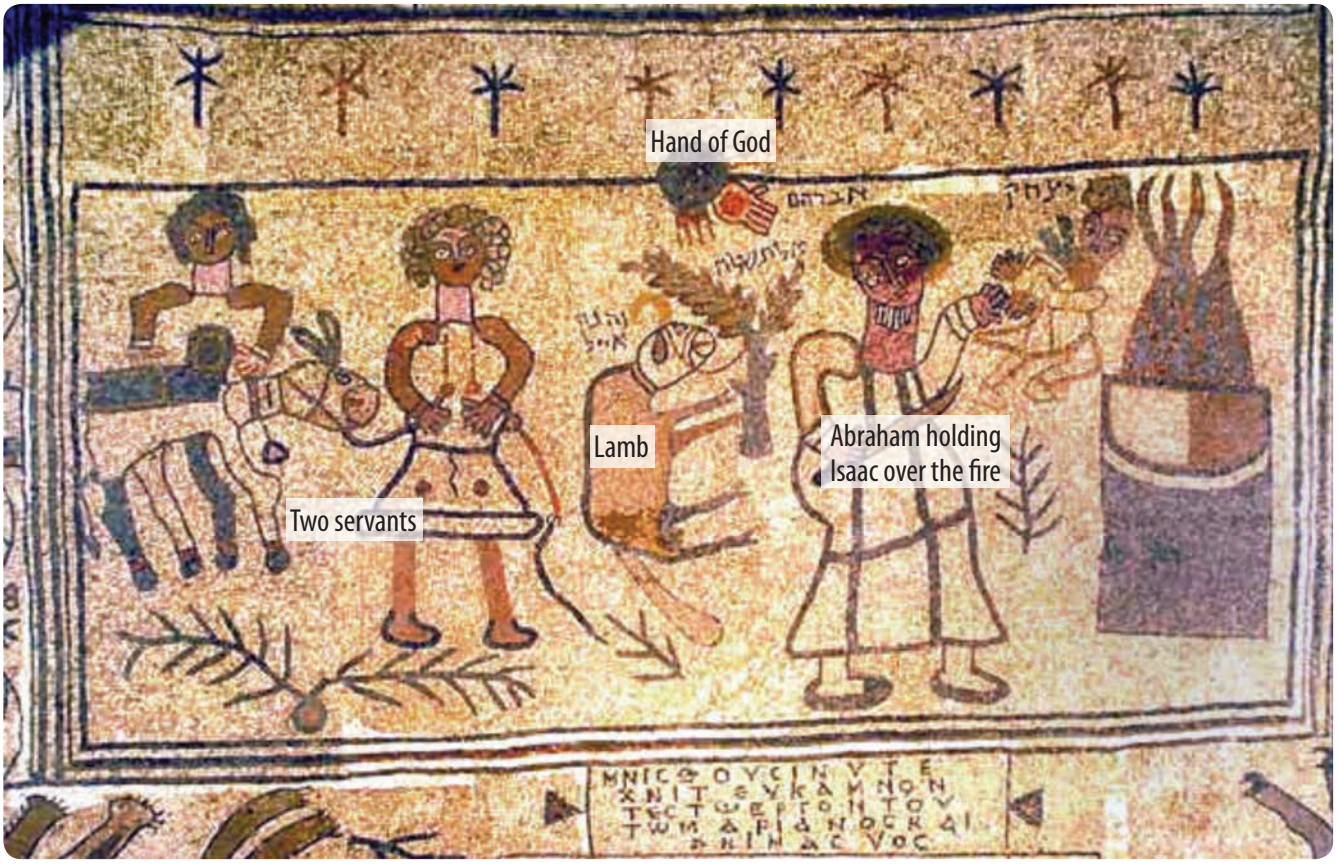
[15]The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, [16]and said, 'By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, [17]I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, [18]and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.'

In the mosaic on the floor of the synagogue, we can see Abraham holding Isaac over the flames about to sacrifice his only son. In the centre of the image, God's hand emerges from the sky and immediately below the hand is the lamb that Abraham uses for the sacrifice after God tells him not to sacrifice his son. On the left-hand side of the image are the two servants who accompanied Abraham and Isaac on the journey.

Christianity emerged from Judaism and continued the belief in one God. By the 2nd century CE, numerous written accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus were in circulation, but it was not until the late 3rd century and early 4th century that depictions of Jesus emerged. Initially, images of Jesus were adapted images of existing Greek statues. Jesus was often depicted as the Good Shepherd, a popular story from the New Testament. Later, images of the baptism of Jesus emerged and in these images the hand of God was seen emerging from the clouds. Some of the earliest Christian images appear in Roman catacombs (underground cemeteries).

Images of God in human form did not exist. In fact, John of Damascus (675–749) wrote, 'If we attempt to make an image of the invisible God, this would be sinful indeed. It is impossible to portray one who is without body: invisible, uncircumscribed and without form.'

Centuries later in the Middle Ages, images of God the Father began to appear in illuminated manuscripts and in stained-glass windows in churches. God was often depicted as an old man with his head surrounded by clouds, similar to the hand in the clouds of earlier times. The artist Michelangelo painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel between 1508–12, a period known as the High



▲ **Figure 5.6** The binding of Isaac

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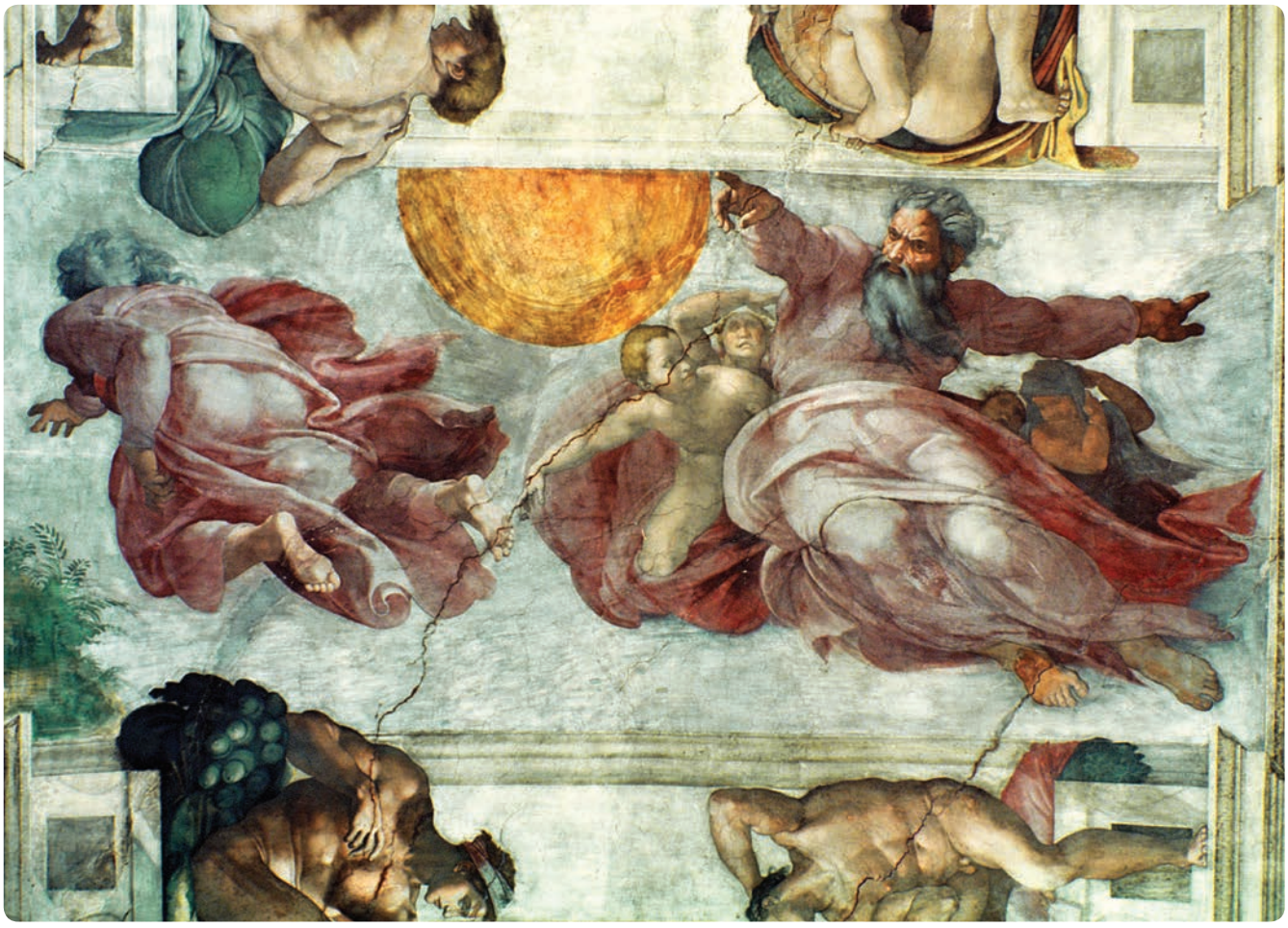

▲ **Figure 5.7** Michelangelo's depiction of the creation of the sun and moon

Renaissance. In the centre of the ceiling, he painted his interpretation of nine scenes from the Book of Genesis. Three of the most well-known of the paintings are the scenes of the first Genesis creation account where God is shown: separating light from darkness; separating the waters from the heavens; creating the earth and placing the sun and moon. In these scenes, God is depicted in human form as powerful and majestic, and also as an old man with a beard. Michelangelo's image of God has influenced artists of subsequent generations, but this image of God as old and male is narrow and limiting, and does not reflect the multiple images of God in scripture.

ACTIVITY 5.5

Use the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7444 and click on 'Central Stories' on the right-hand side of the page. Look closely at the image of God in the three panels on the right-hand side of the image in the top banner: separation of light and darkness; creation of sun, moon and plants; and separation of land from sea. If required, search online for larger images of these three panels.

1. Using a critical 21st-century lens, complete a PMI (positive, minus, interesting) response about the depiction of God in these images.
2. If these images were the only access to your understanding of God's nature, what conclusions would you draw about God?
3. Consider the images of God in the Bible listed in the box on the next page. In pairs, select at least three different sources and either create or source visual images that match the metaphor used. Create a poster that challenges conventional representations of God, including Bible references and quotes where appropriate.
4. If God is unknowable, God is limited by our narrow depiction in words and visual representations. To what extent do you agree with this statement? State your position and use evidence to support your point of view.

continued ➤

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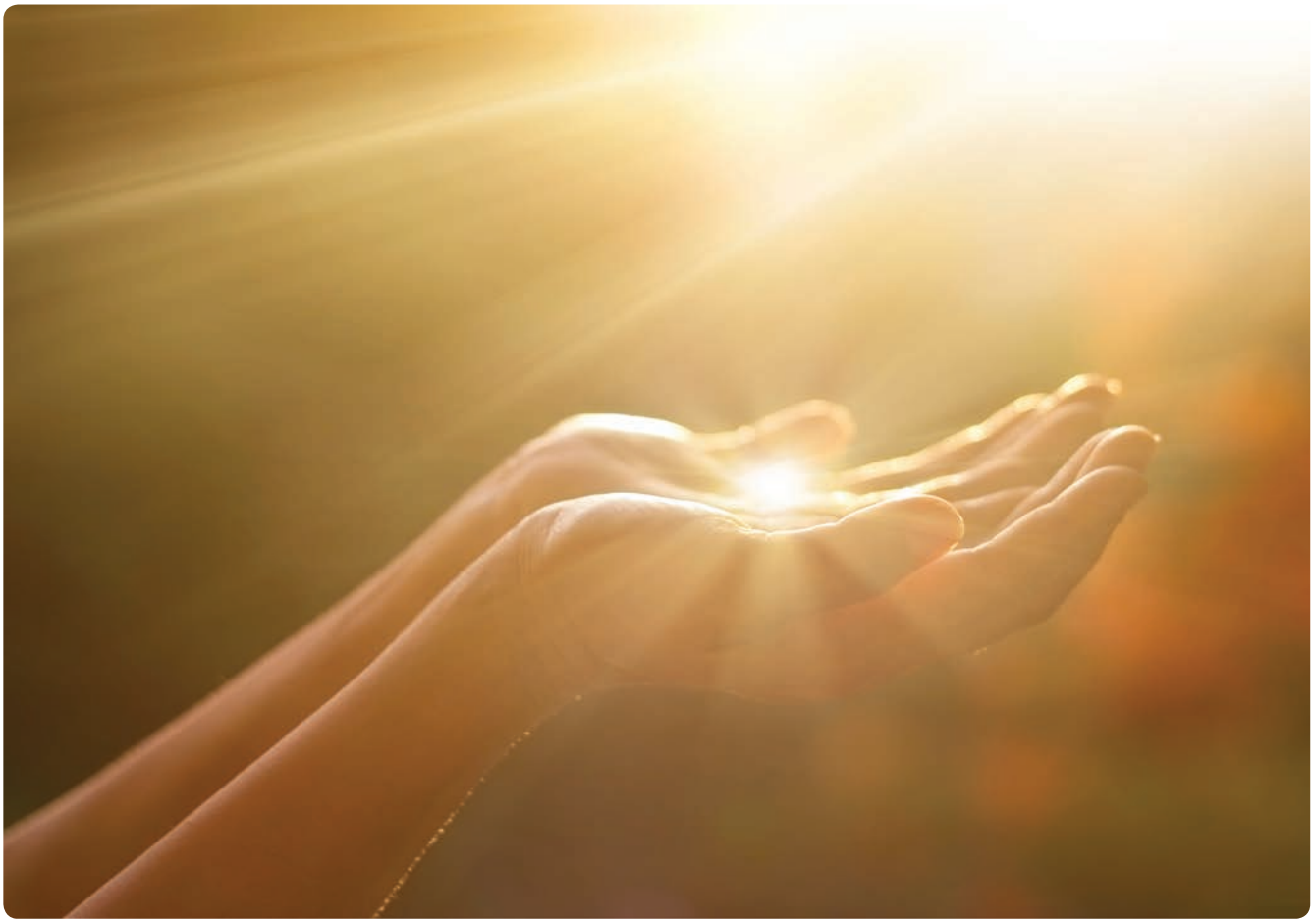
ACTIVITY **5.5** continued

Images of God

Isaiah 64:8 – potter
Psalms 23:1 – shepherd
Deuteronomy 32:4 – rock
Psalm 18:2 – rock, shield and fortress
Genesis 49:9 – lion
Hosea 11:3–4 – mother
Hosea 13:8 – mother bear
Deuteronomy 32:11–12 – eagle
Deuteronomy 32:18 – mother
Isaiah 66:13 – mother
Isaiah 49:15 – mother
Isaiah 42:14 – mother in labour
Psalm 123:2–3 – woman
Psalm 131:2 – mother

5.5 Conclusion

Catholic Christians come to an understanding of God through their experience of the created world, the experiences of their lives and also through the sacred texts of Christianity, as well as the traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church. Catholics express their belief in God in a variety of ways and through a variety of media. While each description and image of God provides a partial way of knowing God, no one description or image can capture the essence of God.



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CHAPTER 6

World Religions

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In unique ways, each world religion is a human reflection of how people perceive God or a higher being. In this section, we will explore the core beliefs and practices of four major world religions – Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism – and the religious practices that reflect these beliefs.

6.1 Judaism

▲ **Figure 6.1** A man reading the Torah

Judaism, one of the oldest world religions, dates back approximately 4000 years. Judaism is a monotheistic religion, which means that the adherents believe in one G-d who is personal and intervenes in human history. Jews trace their beginnings to a group of people called Hebrews, later known as the Israelites, who lived in the Middle East in the area today known as Israel. The religion is based on revelation, which began when G-d called Abraham and Sarah to leave their home and journey forth in faith.

Beliefs

While there is no official creed of Judaism, there is a set of central beliefs formulated by the medieval scholar Maimonides. The beliefs include:

- Belief in G-d who is one, formless, all-knowing and eternal. G-d is the master of the universe, its creator and judge. G-d is loving and just.
- Belief in the words of the prophets.
- Belief that G-d gave the law to Moses.
- Belief that the Messiah, to be sent by G-d, will come one day.
- Belief that there will be a resurrection of the good 'in the world to come'.

The key declaration of faith for Jews is contained in the *Shema*, a passage from the Torah (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) that begins: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD is our G-d, the Lord alone'.

Shema

Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our G-d, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your G-d with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

This prayer, prayed daily by observant Jews, reminds them of the uniqueness of G-d and how Judaism's monotheism is distinguished from the **polytheistic** religions of their neighbours.

polytheistic
belief in many gods

Sacred Texts: Torah

The Torah is the cornerstone of Judaism: it is both the Written Law and the Oral Law of the Jews. The written Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), was, according to tradition, written by Moses. For Jews, the Torah is the source of all wisdom, offering guidance for everyday life. The Hebrew Scriptures are also known by the acronym TaNaK (Tanach) from the first letter of the three sections of the Hebrew Bible: **T**orah (Law), **N**evi'im (Prophets) and **K**etuvim (Writings). The Oral Law provides details on the Written Law and is found in the Talmud, a combination of the *Halakhah* (Law) and *Aggadah* (Story). The Talmud has two parts, *Mishnah* and *Gemara*. The Torah is written on a scroll in Hebrew, which is read from right to left.

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▲ **Figure 6.2** Hebrew scrolls

▲ **Figure 6.3** Jewish male wearing a tallit (prayer shawl)

There are two Talmuds – the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud. When people speak of the Talmud, they are generally referring to the more comprehensive of the two, the Babylonian Talmud.

Daily Prayer

Devout Jews pray at dawn, noon and dusk and sometimes before going to bed. When they pray, male Jews usually use **tefillin**, two small boxes containing scripture passages: one is attached to the head, the other to the left arm with the straps winding down to the hand. Jews are told to wear tefillin in Deuteronomy 6:8: 'Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead'. They also wear a **tallit** (prayer shawl), signifying humility before G-d, and they usually cover their head with a **yarmulke** or **kippah**.

tefillin
sometimes translated as phylacteries. Box-like appurtenances that accompany prayer, worn by adult males (and now some females) at weekday morning services. The boxes have leather straps attached and contain scriptural excerpts. One box is placed on the head, the other is placed on the left arm, near the heart.

tallit
a large, four-cornered shawl with fringes and special knots at the extremities, worn during Jewish morning prayers

yarmulke or **kippah**
a head covering worn by Jewish men for worship, religious study, meals or at any other time

ACTIVITY 6.1

1. Access the video at this link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7445 and watch the clip on the use of tefillin.
   a. Many religions have protocols or procedures to follow when praying. The clip provides some information regarding the procedures for the use of the tefillin. Why do you think the makers of this video clip carefully emphasised the protocols? Choose two of the protocols as an example to use in your response.
   b. The instructions from Deuteronomy 6:8 explain that the small black box or 'house' should be attached to the forehead and the other to the left arm. Why do you think that these two body locations are emphasised in the Torah instructions?
   c. The commentator notes that they are using a particular cultural custom of winding the tefillin strap onto the arm. How might these cultural differences have arisen?
   d. What protocols must be observed when putting the tefillin onto the forehead? Why do you think these protocols have evolved?
   e. In your own words, provide step-by-step instructions for putting on the tefillin.
2. Follow the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7446 and watch the video on how to wear a tallit. Write down four important aspects of

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ACTIVITY 6.1 continued

wearing the tallit that you take from the video and explain why they are important.

3. What is a *gartel*? Who is likely to wear one, and why? Are women required or allowed to wear such garments and adornments for prayer? What are the restrictions and expectations?
4. Prayer is a very personal and important aspect of Jewish life. Can you offer reasons that support the notion of dressing for prayer? Alternatively, what might be some disadvantages of dressing for prayer?

Groups within Judaism

Reform Judaism

Reform Judaism, sometimes known as Progressive or Liberal Judaism, adapts its beliefs and practices to the norms of modern society. Reform Judaism emerged as a response to the emancipation of European Jews in the late 18th century. Reform Judaism believes in the legitimacy of change and accepts that ideas about the divine are human and, therefore, that belief and practice may change and evolve and are influenced by social, scientific, ethical and other human developments. The first Reform Jews were German, and they changed worship services to include males and females singing together accompanied by the organ. While some Hebrew prayers were maintained, prayers in German (the vernacular) were introduced. Classical Reform Judaism emphasises equality. In 1972, the first female rabbi in the United States, Rabbi Sally J. Priesand, was ordained in the Reform tradition and, since that time, women have made up half of the population in Reform rabbinical classes.

Orthodox Judaism

The word orthodox means 'right belief', but for Jews it is also very much about 'right practice'. Orthodox Jews often refer to themselves as 'observant' Jews. They advocate full observance of Jewish religious law (the ***Halakhah***), interpreted in traditional ways. Orthodoxy in Jewish society emerged towards the end of the 18th century as a reaction to the rise of Reform Judaism, assimilation in western and central Europe, and secularisation.

Orthodoxy sees the law as a direct expression of G-d's will and, therefore, promotes the divine source of the Torah and the unchanging nature of its laws. Orthodox Jews are committed to the full observance of the *Halakhah* and the future coming of the messiah. Orthodox Jews are mainly concentrated in Israel and the United States, but every large Jewish centre in the world has a significant Orthodox population.

In Orthodox communities, males and females sit in separate areas in the **synagogue** and services are conducted in Hebrew and led by male rabbis. Males keep their heads covered with a yarmulke or skullcap as a reminder that G-d is above all. Orthodox homes keep **kosher** dietary requirements.

Halakhah
any normative Jewish law, custom, practice or rite

synagogue
the central institution of Jewish communal worship and study; a term used for the place of gathering

kosher
ritually correct Jewish dietary practices

▲ **Figure 6.4** Female Rabbis Emily Eilberg, Sandy Sallo and Sally J. Priesand

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▲ **Figure 6.5** Many male orthodox Jews cover their head as a sign of reverence before G-d.

Conservative Judaism

Conservative Judaism occupies a middle position within Jewish society: its synagogues are perceived to be more traditional than the Reform synagogues and less traditional than the Orthodox synagogues. Conservative Judaism shares with Orthodoxy the ongoing authority of *Halakhah*, stresses the historical development of Judaism and believes that Jewish law can be changed. Conservative Judaism is the largest and most popular form of Judaism in the United States and there are smaller groups of Conservative Jews throughout the world.

As far as religious behaviour is concerned, Conservative Jews expect that the rabbi and the cantor will be more traditional than their counterparts in the Reform community. Conservative Jews usually maintain traditional Jewish practices such as lighting Sabbath candles and attending Passover Seder, and very few Conservative Jews intermarry. What distinguishes Conservative Jews from Orthodox Jews is their acceptance that change is permissible and necessary. This is most evident with regard to the role of women. Most traditional Jewish texts restrict women from reading the Torah in public, from reciting the worship service on behalf of the congregation and from being counted as part of a **minyan**.

minyan
a prayer quorum of 10 male Jews over the age of 13

Conservative Judaism has made the following modifications: women read from the Torah in Conservative synagogues; women lead services and in most, but not all, synagogues in the United States women are counted in the minyan. For many, Conservative Judaism is attractive because it is traditional without being rigorous and stresses communal standards without imposing on personal autonomy.

ACTIVITY 6.2

1. Copy the table below, then use the information on the preceding pages to write summaries about each Jewish group (Reform, Orthodox and Conservative), including historical and cultural differences that have occurred since the end of the 18th century.
2. In the final two rows of the table, research two customs or beliefs and record how each of the groups addresses or sees the custom or belief differently.

Summary/belief/custom	Reform Judaism	Orthodox Judaism	Conservative Judaism
Summary			
Belief/custom			
Belief/custom			

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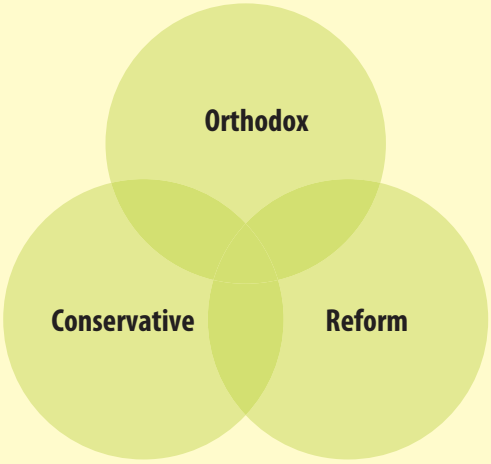
ACTIVITY 6.2 continued

3 Copy and complete the following table on the different groups within Judaism. You may need to conduct further research to complete the table.

Religious element	Orthodox Judaism	Conservative Judaism	Reform Judaism
G-d			
Minyan			
Rabbi	Male		
Congregation			Sit together
Language used in the service			
Role of women			
Use of the Torah	Literal interpretation		
Marriage			
Kosher laws			

4 Working in pairs and using the three-way Venn diagram below, compare and contrast the beliefs and practices of the main groups within Judaism.



5 When you have completed the diagram, write a detailed paragraph that responds to the thesis statement: 'Despite significant differences in practices and customs, all Jews share the same beliefs and ideas about G-d.' Decide to what extent you agree with this and present your case, using evidence.

Synagogue

The word 'synagogue' comes from the Greek and means 'to gather together'. Synagogues probably became more prominent after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. There are many different types of synagogues, depending on when and where they were built, and there are differences between Orthodox and Reform synagogues.

There are very few set requirements for the architecture of synagogues. Frequently, they mirror the style of the period in which they were built and the cultures to which they belong. Synagogues must,

Figure 6.6 Inside a synagogue ▶

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however, have windows for letting in light, as light is a sign of the strength and guidance of G-d.

An important feature of the synagogue is the ***bimah***, which is a raised platform where the Torah is read. It is normally in the middle of the synagogue, but during the 19th century some Reform synagogues placed it directly in front of the Ark. The Ark, *Aron Hakodesh*, was originally the wooden box in which the two stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments were kept in the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:10–16); however, it disappeared during the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BCE. During the Middle Ages, a cupboard fixed against the east wall of each synagogue was referred to as an Ark, and one or more copies of the Torah were kept there. The Ark thus became the focal point in the synagogue.

bimah
a raised platform where the Torah is read

Orthodox synagogues have a separate section, often a gallery, for women. Progressive Jews do not separate men and women in the synagogue.

ACTIVITY 6.3

1. Access this link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7447 and watch the clip for the New London Synagogue.
   a. The presenter explains that this is a traditional synagogue and its layout is consistent with Orthodox Judaism. Draw a floor plan of the synagogue and label the *bimah*, women's gallery/seating area, eternal light and Ark.
   b. The presenter explains that anything required during the service must be carried or already be in the synagogue. Explain why this practice is observed by the congregation.
   c. It is noted in the clip that the cantor and the congregation face Jerusalem. What considerations would need to be noted when designing a synagogue?
2. Go to the interactive tour of a synagogue via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7448.
   a. Click on each of the key elements of the synagogue in order to copy and complete the following table:

Element	Role and function in the synagogue
Ark	
Bimah	
Ner-Tamid	
Cantor	

   b. How does the layout of a synagogue indicate the specific group within Judaism? Draw the floor plans of an Orthodox synagogue and a Reform synagogue and label the different sections of the plans, including the *bimah*, Ark, *Ner-Tamid* and where the congregation sits.

or,

3. Access the synagogue tour via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7449.
   a. Read each section. In your workbook, draw a floor plan of a synagogue, and place each of the important sections/elements within the plan.
   b. Watch the video about visiting a synagogue using the following link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7450. Rabbi Emma takes us through a modern synagogue. What did you learn from Rabbi Emma's tour that you did not already know?
   c. Look at the images on the Heritage Calling website, accessed via http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7451, and try to identify the key features in the different synagogues. How do they compare with Rabbi Emma's synagogue?

Dietary Requirements

From the earliest times, Jews have taken great care about the choice and preparation of food. At the core of their thinking is that the preparation and consumption of food should be done according to religious laws referred to as 'kosher', meaning ritually correct. For Orthodox Jews, meat and dairy must not be eaten together in the same meal. This means a house that keeps kosher will have separate cooking utensils, crockery and fridges for dairy and meat. The practice derives from a rule that forbids the cooking of a baby goat or lamb in its mother's milk (Exodus 34:26). Depending on which group of Judaism people belong to, they observe kosher rules to a greater or lesser degree.

The main laws related to kosher food are contained in Leviticus 11.

Judaism is a living faith of a people who believe in one G-d. Their ritual actions acknowledge and remember G-d's intervention in their history. The Jewish people are ethnically and ideologically diverse and for centuries they have adapted to changing circumstances and environments.

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ACTIVITY 6.4

1. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7452 and watch the clip about food and dietary obligations within Judaism.
   a. What would an Orthodox Jewish household have to consider for the preparation of food on the Sabbath?
   b. If you were in a household that held strongly to the beliefs about kosher living, what differences would there be in the layout of the kitchen?
   c. The clip emphasises the cultural differences in Jewish cooking. Identify some of these and how they have arisen.
2. Access this link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7453 and watch the clip on kosher.
   a. The clip shows a picture of a cow and identifies that only the front section of the cow can be consumed. Why would observant Jews not eat the other half of the cow?
   b. The clip identifies that pre-prepared food such as canned goods and processed foods are tested to ensure they are kosher. Explain why you think the rabbi and observant Jews would check the food labels of processed foods.
3. The kosher laws are identified within the Torah, especially in the Book of Leviticus. Foods that can be eaten or are forbidden are identified within the text. Copy and complete the table below by looking up these references from Leviticus 11.

Biblical reference	Law relating to the consumption of . . .	What must be observed	Reason for this rule
Leviticus 11:2–8	Livestock – meat		
Leviticus 11:9–12			
Leviticus 11:13–19			
Leviticus 11:20–23			
Leviticus 11:27–28			

4. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7454. Read through the information to discover what makes food kosher.
   a. What does kosher mean? What are the three categories of kosher food?
   b. What does Genesis suggest a diet should consist of? When did this change?
   c. What is *kashrut*?
5. On the same page, watch the two videos about kosher animals. Create a list of animals that are kosher and explain why, referring to the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7455 for more help. Refer to the source of the rule in your answer.

6.2 Islam

Islam, the religion of the people who follow the teachings of Muhammad, has existed since 610 CE when Muhammad is reported to have received his first revelation from Allah (God) in a cave at Hira. The word 'Islam' means submission, submitting or committing oneself to Allah. The term Islam also covers a system of beliefs and practices followed by Muslims, the adherents of Islam.

Muhammad was a devout man who often spent time meditating. When he was about 40 years of

▲ **Figure 6.7** Muslim men praying

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age, it is reported that he received his first revelation, which is recorded in the **Qur'an** and is described as a bright presence standing before him that put a cloth over his eyes covered in writing and commanded him to recite what was written on it:

> Recite in the name of the Lord who created – created man from clots of blood
> Recite! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One, who by the pen taught man what he did not know.
> Indeed, man transgresses in thinking himself his own master, for to your Lord all things return... **Prostrate** yourself and come nearer. (96:1–19)

The revelations continued for another 22 years and these divinely revealed messages formed the context of the Qur'an, Islam's holiest book.

Qur'an
literally 'recitation'; the revelations that came from God to Muhammad between 610 and 632; memorising and reciting the Qur'an is one of the most important religious activities for Muslims

prostrate
to lie face down

For 13 years, Muhammad preached his message to a small group of followers. Eventually, in 622, he moved to Medina. This journey, known as the *Hijra* or emigration, was the turning point for the spread of Islam and after eight years of armed conflict with his Meccan opponents, Muhammad prevailed. He received Meccans into his community in 632, and 22 years later, he died. His successors' armies spread Muslim rule across Arabia and beyond, and within a century Islam spread from Spain through to what we now know as Pakistan.

Beliefs

Shahada
the formula of witness: 'There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the messenger of God', by which a Muslim witnesses to his or her faith and a non-Muslim becomes a Muslim

Core to Islam is the belief in one God, Allah, who is all powerful, transcendent and who created and controls the world. Muslims are keen to point out that the word *Allah* is not the name of God: it merely means God. The central declaration of Islam is that there is only one God, Allah. Devout Muslims proclaim the oneness of God in the ***Shahada***, which is spoken every day in Arabic.

> There is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is his prophet.

This proclamation asserts that all other deities that have been worshipped in the course of history are either myths or figments of the imagination.

Qur'an

The sacred book of Islam, the Qur'an, is considered by Muslims to be the final word of guidance, given from Allah to the Prophet Muhammad through the Angel Jibra'ail (Gabriel). The Qur'an is absolutely central to Islam and Muslims believe the words of the Qur'an are the literal, verbal revelation of God.

▲ **Figure 6.8** Arabic script in a Qur'an

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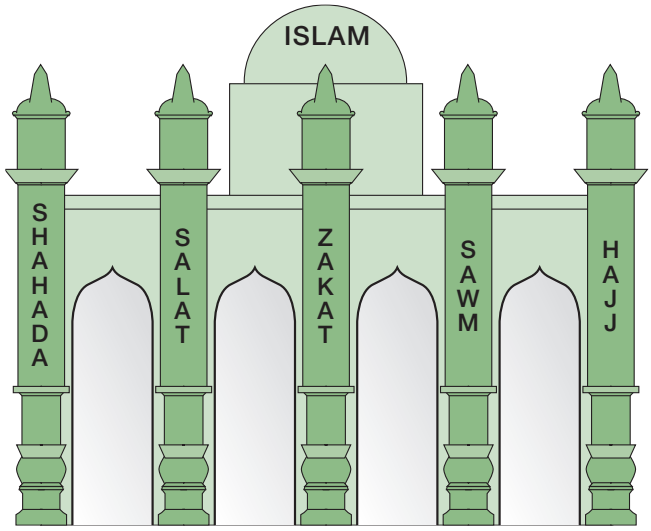
The word Qur'an means 'recitation', which emphasises the oral character of the text: it is intended to be read aloud and listened to. The Qur'an contains 114 *surahs* (chapters) and 6616 *ayahs* (verses), beginning with the longest *surahs* and finishing with the shortest. The whole of the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad over a period of 23 years, a few *ayahs* at a time. The Prophet was unable to read or write, so he dictated the revealed *ayahs* to a scribe who recorded them on any available material. Of the 114 *surahs*, 87 were received during the 13 years the Prophet lived in Mecca and the remaining 27 *surahs* were sent down during the 10 years he spent at Medina following the migration from Mecca.

Five Pillars



▲ **Figure 6.9** The Five Pillars of Islam

Central to Islam are the **Five Pillars**, which are the foundation of faith. The pillars include:

1 *Shahada* (Creed): 'there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger'. When recited with belief, this single sentence makes a person a Muslim. It is whispered into the ear of a newborn child and into the ear of a dying person: so it is the first and last thing heard by a Muslim. This pillar has both a personal and public dimension. It is personal in the belief it expresses, but public in the act of witnessing: without witness a person does not belong to the *umma* (the whole world community of Muslims).

Five Pillars
Shahada (Creed); *salat* (prayer); *zakat* (charity); *sawm* (fasting during Ramadan); *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca)

2 *Salat* (prayer) is a highly structured form of prayer requiring specific body movements and the recitation of specific verses, and must be performed five times a day. Before praying, each Muslim is expected to perform a ritual washing (*wudu*) of hands, arms, feet, face and neck. If a person believes they are in a state of purity then they are not required to complete *wudu*, but it is customary to do so. While *salat* is prescribed in the Qur'an (11:114), prayer five times a day is not prescribed in the Qur'an. The times for prayer are:
   - Fajr – dawn
   - Suhr – noon
   - 'Asr – mid-afternoon
   - Maghrib – after sunset
   - 'Isha – evening, when the sun disappears.

   Believers pray facing Mecca and in mosques the direction of Mecca is marked by a niche, or mihrab. Times for prayer vary according to date and place and in Muslim countries the times for prayer are usually published in local newspapers, displayed on the walls of the mosque and available on the internet. *Salat* can be performed alone or with others and in any space that is considered to be ritually clean. If in a group, people generally perform *salat* in a mosque.
3 *Zakat* (charity) is 2.5 per cent of one's wealth, which is paid each year to charity. It is not a tax on yearly income, rather it is a percentage of all that one owns. All adult Muslims must pay, and the recipients of *zakat* are listed in the Qur'an (9:60): these include the poor and needy, those labouring for God and prisoners of war. *Zakat* is not considered a donation, but rather something that already belongs to the recipients.
4 *Sawm* (fasting during Ramadan). During Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, Muslims are required to abstain from food, drink, smoking and sexual activity from dawn until after sunset. Children, the elderly, nursing mothers and those with ill health are exempt from fasting. When Ramadan falls in winter, the days are short and fasting is relatively easy, but when Ramadan falls in summer the days are long and hot and fasting can be a great hardship.

▲ **Figure 6.10** *Iftar* (breaking of the fast)

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The breaking of the fast, ***iftar***, occurs just before Maghrib prayer when people take a small amount of food. After prayer, families and friends gather for a large and sometimes lavish meal. The nights of Ramadan are joyous occasions and are filled with entertainment, visiting friends and even special programming on television.

Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca). Every Muslim who is physically and financially able must take the *Hajj* at least once in their lifetime. The pilgrimage to Mecca was already a practice before Muhammad was born because worshippers wanted to visit the mysterious black meteorite that had fallen in the area. Muhammad, according to divine revelation, continued the practice, including veneration of the black meteorite. Pilgrims arrive in Mecca by the seventh month. Men dress in a special two-piece white robe called an *ihram*, which symbolises the equality of all Muslim believers. Women have no special clothing, but usually do not cover their faces when participating in the *Hajj*. Before beginning the pilgrimage, the pilgrim recites the *talbiya* in Arabic.

iftar
breaking of the fast

Here I am, O God, here I am.
You have no associate. Here I am.
Praise belongs to you, and blessing and power.
You have no associate. Here I am.

ACTIVITY 6.5

1. *Shahada* (creed).
   - a Conduct some research to discover the 99 names of Allah. Choose three of these names. How do they provide an insight into understanding Allah?
   - b What is the *adhan*? Explain the role of the muezzin. In contemporary times, how is the role of the muezzin realised in suburban settings?
   - c The *Shahada* is the first pillar of Islam and reciting it with belief makes one a Muslim. What are the specific requirements for this recitation to be accepted as conversion?
2. *Salat* (prayer).
   - a How many times a day would an observant Muslim pray?
   - b How have schools and workplaces accommodated the prayer requirements of observant Muslims?
   - c As with many religions, there are protocols to be observed for prayer in Islam. List the protocols that an observant Muslim must follow.
   - d When Muslims pray, they are forbidden to fidget or look around. They must pray as in the presence of Allah and in a state of concentration. Why would this be such an important component of prayer?
   - e What is the role of the imam within the mosque and congregation?
   - f There are a number of body movements required for Muslim prayer. Conduct some research to discover what these prayer movements are and why you think they have evolved.
   - g Times for *salat* vary according to date and place. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7456 for more information.
     - i Find the prayer times for today. You may notice there is additional information and variations in spelling, so you will need to ascertain which times are for prayers by hovering over the specific words.
     - ii Scroll down to find the section where you can change the month. Use this to find the prayer times for your birthday.
3. *Zakat* (charity).
   - a The Prophet has stated that 'Charity is a necessity for every Muslim'. He was asked: 'What if the person has nothing to give? The Prophet replied, 'he should give with his own hands for this benefit and then give something of his profit to the community' (24:39).

     What does this quote from the Qur'an reveal about the Prophet's views on alms-giving?
   - b How might *zakat* or alms-giving be seen as a way of purifying the contributor and freeing them from selfishness?
   - c *Zakat* is an often-misunderstood practice of Islam. Go online to find the homepage of the National Zakat Foundation Australia. Browse the various tabs to learn about *zakat*.

     Click on the 'Cases' tab and read one of the case studies. In three or four sentences, explain why the recipient was in need of receiving support and consider what the outcome may have been if such funds were not available.
   - d Find the calculator under the 'Zakat' tab, or access the calculator link at http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7458. Click on the 'Bismillah, let's begin' button. What is taken into account as an asset when calculating zakatable wealth? What liabilities are considered?
   - e At what life stage are people expected to *zakat*?
   - f What is *nisab* and what implications does it have for *zakat*?
4. *Sawm* (fasting)
   - a For the time of Ramadan, devout Muslims fast during the day. Why is fasting important?
   - b How do families celebrate the end of Ramadan?
   - c When is Ramadan celebrated in Australia this year?
   - d Imagine you are a young girl or boy in a Muslim family living in Queensland. Choose one day during this year's Ramadan month and create a diary for the events and requirements of your day. Remember to include food preparation and eating times, *salat* prayer times and school commitments. What are some challenges you have identified for young people? What is one of the values or fulfilments s/he may obtain?
   - e What is the purpose of Ramadan? Conduct some research to discover the religious requirements of Ramadan and the spiritual lessons gained over this important month.

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 6.5 continued

f The conclusion of Ramadan is celebrated with a festival. Conduct some research to discover more about this festival.
  i When does it occur and what happens?
  ii How is it celebrated in and around your local community?
  iii Select a Muslim country and explore how Ramadan is celebrated there. What similarities and differences have you discovered and why do you believe they occur?

5 *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca).

a Go to the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7459 for information about the *Hajj*. Go to the 'Virtual Hajj' tab at the top of the page. Click on each of the stages.

Step one
- Why would people change from their everyday clothes into similar clothes for *Hajj*?
- What colour clothing do most people wear for the *Hajj*?

Step two
- What is significant about the Ka'bah?
- Why do Muslims face towards the Ka'bah?

Step three
- At the Mina Valley and the plain of Arafat, the pilgrims spend time in reflection and prayer. Why would this be a very significant aspect of the *Hajj*?

Step four
- During this night of prayer and reflection, pilgrims collect stones. Conduct some research to discover what the Jamarat Pillars are and their significance to the *Hajj*.

Step five
- Why would the pilgrims be invited to 'cut their hair' at the conclusion of the *Hajj*?
- The pilgrims are also asked to take the spirit of the *Hajj* experience home to others. Why would this be an important part of the experience?

b Imagine you have a casual job in your family's travel business. Your business has been approached to prepare an itinerary for members of the local Muslim community for the upcoming *Hajj*. You have been given the job of doing the background research for your supervisor. You need to find out the dates, location and duration of the *Hajj*. You will need to discover the ritual requirements for participating. You will also need to know the types of accommodation available, appropriate clothing and who is permitted to attend. Once you have finished this, you will present the detailed information to your supervisor in a clearly set-out document and include any links or reference materials in case they need to be revisited.

Friday Prayer

Friday prayer (*jum'a*) is congregational prayer in the mosque and it is compulsory for all men to pray the noon prayer together. The congregational *salat* includes a sermon that is delivered from the minbar (raised platform like a pulpit).

▲ **Figure 6.11** Men praying in a mosque

Mosque (Masjid)

Masjid (**mosque**) literally means 'place of prostration' and is the place for communal prayer. One distinguishing feature of a mosque is the **minaret**, which means 'lighthouse'. It is from the minaret that the **muezzin** traditionally chanted the call to prayer five times a day. Today, the call to prayer is usually broadcast via loudspeakers. Larger mosques can have up to four minarets. Another external feature of the mosque is the dome, which represents the vault of heaven, reminding the worshipper of

Friday prayer (*jum'a*)
congregational prayer in the mosque

mosque
literally 'place of prostration in prayer' where Muslims gather for *salah* and/or communal purposes

minaret
tower connected with a mosque from which the *adhan* (call to worship) is given

muezzin
person who gives the *adhan* or call to *worship*

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the splendour of the creator who governs heaven and earth. The dome also aids air flow and makes the building cooler. The third external feature is a fountain/s for ablutions. In modern mosques, the washing facilities may be built inside the mosque. Inside the mosque, there is no furniture, nor statues or religious images: the only decoration will be extracts from the Qur'an painted in elaborate calligraphy on the walls. One internal feature is the **mihrab**, a niche in the wall, indicating the direction of Mecca, usually designed in the shape of an archway; it is often highly decorated to focus the attention of the believer towards Mecca. The **minbar**, a three-stepped raised platform, is located against the ***qibla*** wall, near the mihrab. Most mosques have separate spaces for women: the space may be behind a curtain, or in some mosques there are separate gated alcoves for women. The women's area is always behind the men as Islamic law requires that women stand behind men during *salat* for modesty's sake.

mihrab
a niche in the inner wall of a mosque, indicating the direction of Mecca

minbar
pulpit in the mosque from which the *khutba* (sermon) is given

qibla
the direction of Mecca

ACTIVITY 6.6

1 Copy the table below, then access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7460 and go to 'The mosque revealed'.
   a Move the mouse across the screen to find out what the following items are and their role or function in the mosque:

Item	Role in the mosque
Minaret	
Mihrab	
Ablutions area	
Dome	

   b Who is entitled to speak or preach from the minbar? Is there any significance regarding the number of steps? Who would speak from the top step?

2 Access the links http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7461 and http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7462 to watch the videos about mosques, and answer the following questions:
   a What are the main parts of a mosque? Draw a floor plan of a mosque and label the significant parts, giving a brief explanation of each.
   b Besides the prayer room and ablutions area, what else is included inside a mosque and what activities occur there?
   c What are the religious protocols required for men and women when entering a mosque? Identify the differences for the genders in preparation and prayer, use of space and activities carried out. Why do such differences exist?
   d Mosques have no images or pictures to decorate them. Why is this the case?
   e Consider the various ways mosques can use forms of decoration to enhance their beauty. List several ways artistic expression is manifested in a mosque. Find several examples of mosques that are aesthetically appealing to you and explain how this is achieved.

Shi'ite Islam

Shi'ite Islam believes that leadership succession was hereditary, descending from the family of Muhammad. In contrast with the common view that Muhammad did not appoint a direct successor, Shi'ites believe that he appointed Ali as his successor. There are three main groups of Shi'ites: the 'Fivers' (Zaydis); the 'Seveners' (Ismailis); and the 'Twelvers' (Imanis). Most Shi'ites believe that spiritual power passed to the Twelve successors or imams. Shi'ite Islam is attractive to non-Arab Muslims. Iran is the home of the majority of Shi'ites, while smaller populations exist in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Pakistan.

Sunni Islam

Sunnis, known in Arabic as *ahl al-summa wa-l-jama'a*, accepted the legitimacy of the orthodox caliphates and developed a religious, political, legal and cultural system that was consistent with their beliefs. For Sunnis, the Qur'an and **hadiths** express God's will and they formed schools that interpreted the Qur'an and hadiths for everyday life. The centre of Sunni Islam is Saudi Arabia, where strict laws govern Muslim and non-Muslim behaviour.

Shi'ites
believe that leadership succession was hereditary, descending from the family of Muhammad

Sunnis
group within Islam who follow strict observation of the Qur'an and hadiths

hadiths
a report of something the Prophet said, did or approved of, or the sum total of these reports

Dietary Laws

You may have noticed in a number of food stores the sign '**halal**'. Halal in its broadest sense refers to a range of items and activities that are permitted, such as certain behaviour, speech or dress. In a more specific way, halal refers to the food laws of Islam. Halal food laws

halal
literally 'permitted'; includes all of the *Sharia* (Islamic law) valuations except forbidden; also specifically used for food that may be eaten

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ACTIVITY 6.7

1. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7463 and examine the map showing Muslim distribution across the Middle East, northern Africa, India and South East Asia. Identify the countries in which Sunni and Shia (Shi'ite) Muslims can be found.
   a. Looking at the map, it would appear that the Sunni Muslims had migrated into many different countries while the Shia Muslims live in the Arabian States. What factors may have led to this diversity?
   b. There are further sub-denominations within Islam. Conduct some research to find out how they originated and how they define themselves within their denomination.
2. Access the links http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7464 and http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7465 and answer the following questions:
   a. How many Sunni Muslims are predicted to be in the world in 2030?
   b. How many Shia Muslims are predicted to be in the world in 2030?
   c. Where are these groups likely to live?
   d. On a world map, indicate where the majority of Sunnis and Shia live now. If there are any differences between these figures and the projections for 2030, indicate this on the map also.
   e. On the same map, highlight the Shia majority countries.
   f. Consider the Muslim population of Iran, its location and its neighbours. Given your understanding of Islam and the Sunni and Shia groups, what possible issues can you suggest might arise for the inhabitants of Iran leading up to 2030? Provide reasons and evidence to support your position.

are said to be provided by God and obeying these laws is an important aspect of religious practice. The Qur'an states:

> O you who believe! Eat of the good things that We have provided you with, and give thanks to Allah if Him it is that you serve. (2:172)

▲ **Figure 6.12** Halal sticker on a shop window

Islam divides edible food into three basic categories:

- halal – fitting
- *mushbooh* – uncertain
- *haram* – forbidden.

The basic assumption is that all food is halal except for that which is particularly named as *haram*. Islam teaches that all sea animals are halal provided that they live in the water all the time. Unlike kosher requirements of Judaism, Muslims are allowed to eat camel, horse and rabbit following the Qur'an statement:

> He has only forbidden you what dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that over which any other (name) than (that of) Allah has been invoked; but whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring, nor exceeding the limit, no sin shall be upon him; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (2:173; also 16:115; 5:3)

The Hadith adds animals with fangs, birds of prey, pests and poisonous animals are also *haram*. The foods that are forbidden are pork, blood and carrion (dead, putrefied flesh). Animals that have died of natural causes or have been killed by other animals are *haram*. For an animal to be classified as halal, it must be slaughtered in the proper way known as ***zabihah***. According to *zabihah*, the slaughterer must be a mature, committed Muslim who understands the method and is approved by religious authorities. Prior to the killing, the animal's eyes and ears should be checked to ensure that it is fit for consumption. The animal should be given a drink before slaughter to quench its thirst and the knife should not be sharpened in front of the animal because it increases the animal's distress. The animal, while still alive, should be cut across the throat with one swift cut. It should not be drugged or stunned in any way. A blessing, or the name of Allah, must be uttered before or during the slaughtering as an acknowledgement that God is the one who gives and takes life.

zabihah
Islamic method for slaughtering animals

Islam is a faith, a way of life and a social movement. All Muslims believe in one God, submission to the will of Allah and in the revelation of God to the Prophet Muhammad as recorded in the Qur'an. They believe that the revelation is final and fixed, although they may disagree over some interpretations of secondary literature such as the Hadith. Their life is regulated by prayer five times a day and for many Muslims the culmination of their striving to be faithful would find expression in undertaking the *Hajj*.

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ACTIVITY 6.8

1. Access this link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7466 and watch the clip on understanding halal food.
   a. After viewing the clip, explain what the following words mean: halal, *mashbooh*, *haram*.
   b. The clip was made by an organisation for the research and promotion of halal food. Why do you think such an organisation would exist?
   c. Copy and complete the following table with verses from the Qur'an that are related to halal food consumption.
2. Imagine your family runs a small grocery business and you wish to cater for the needs of your local community, including the Muslim population. Your parents have asked you to produce an A4 size pamphlet that identifies halal and *haram* foods.
3. There has been some controversy and debate over halal certification in the media. Explain what is required for halal certification; how and when it is obtained; and who is responsible. What recommendations would you make about halal food certification to assist in reducing its controversial nature?

Item	Extract from the Qur'an
Non-consumption of pork	
Consumption of seafood	
Eating of rabbit	
Merciful killing of animals	

6.3 Hinduism

▲ **Figure 6.13** The Durga Puja is one of numerous Hindu festivals.

Hinduism describes a broad range of beliefs and practices belonging to the majority of people living in India and Nepal. Within Hinduism, there exists a wide diversity of beliefs and practices, and some scholars describe the religion as Hinduisms rather than Hinduism. Its complexity extends to its social structure, rituals, mythology, sacred texts, enormous number of deities and philosophy. Hinduism is polytheistic, which means the people worship many gods.

Beliefs

Hindus believe that the universe exists within a cyclical process of creation, preservation and destruction. Therefore, the current world is just one of the innumerable worlds that have preceded it and will follow it. The cosmos is made up of many realms: the heavenly realm, the earthly realm and the subterranean realm, all of which can be subdivided.

Deities

The Hindu tradition has a wide variety of deities, both male and female. Three of the major gods, associated with creation, preservation and destruction, are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; together they are sometimes referred to as *Trimuti*, or triple form. The images of Hindu gods are very highly decorated and colour is used to symbolise their nature. Often the gods are accompanied by animals or birds that assist them to move around the cosmos.

Brahma, the creative force of the universe, is often the object of collective worship and depicted as an old, thoughtful king with four arms and four faces that look in all four directions. Brahma is accompanied by a white goose.

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▲ **Figure 6.14** A Brahma statue

▲ **Figure 6.15** Vishnu and Lakshmi

Vishnu, associated with loving-kindness, is the preserver of order and harmony. He is often depicted lying on a many-headed cobra, which symbolises cosmic energy and time. Because he is associated with loving-kindness, he appears in various physical forms to help people in need. There are 10 common avatars or incarnations of Vishnu, which are: Matsya, a man/fish; Kurma, a man/tortoise; Varaha, a man/boar; Narasimha, a man/lion; Vamana, a dwarf; Parasurama (Rama with axe and first human avatar); Rama of Ayodhya; Krishna; Buddha; and Kalki.

Shiva destroys and recreates the universe and he appears in several different forms. Most frequently he is portrayed in bronze statues as Shiva Nataraja, known as ruler of the dance. He stands on the dwarf demon Apasamara Purusha, which represents human pride, and as he dances he is surrounded by a ring of fire, symbolic of his destructive powers; his long hair flies in the air and he has four arms. In one hand he holds an hourglass drum, which symbolises the pulse of time, and in the other hand he holds fire, which symbolises his destructive powers; in the third hand there is often a deer, symbolising an unsteady mind that darts around; and the gesture of the fourth hand is a *mudra*, which often points to the crushed demon underfoot.

▲ **Figure 6.16** Shiva statue on Talao Lake, Mauritius

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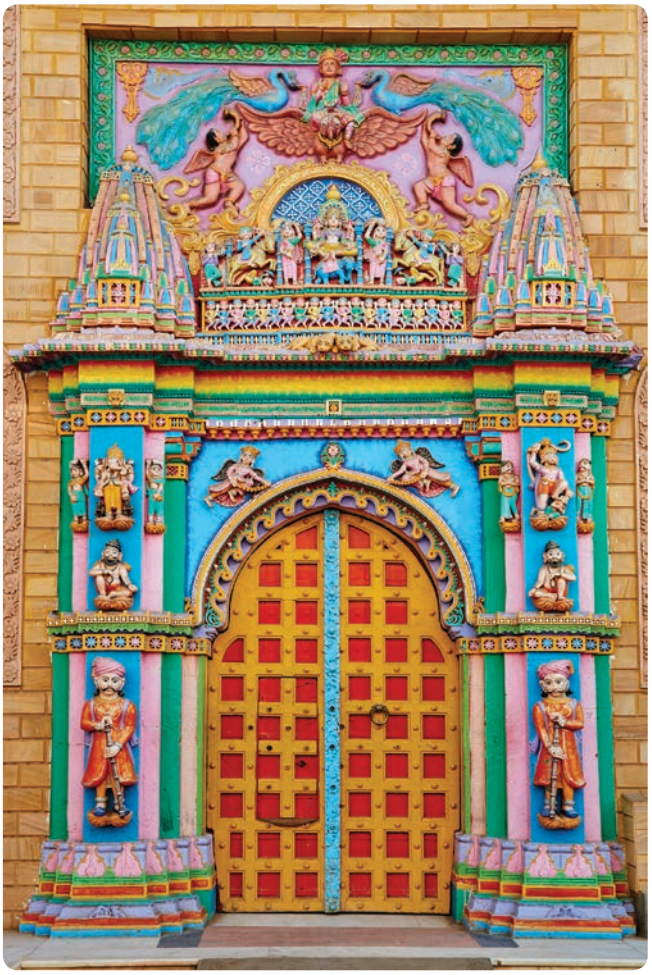
Another very popular god, Ganesha, is depicted as a human with the head of an elephant with one broken tusk and is known as the Lord of Obstacles: his statue often has a rat sitting at his foot, symbolising that the overcoming of desire provides enough strength to transport even an elephant.

▲ **Figure 6.17** Ganesha

Mandirs

The common term for a Hindu temple is *mandir*, which means 'house of god' and describes the place where the god/s resides. *Mandirs* may be located in the heart of the city, on river banks or in forests across India, and larger ones may be associated with pilgrimage destinations.

Hindu temples are symbols of the universe and, while they differ in style and shape, there are some basic features that are common to all *mandirs*. The outside of the temple is covered with many images representing the infinity of being. As adherents enter the temple and come closer to the centre, the images become less elaborate. At the centre is the *garbhagrha*, or 'womb house', where the image or ***murti*** of the deity is installed. Normally, there are no large windows or lavish decoration, only the image of the deity. In some temples, entry to the *garbhagrha* is restricted to priests and so devotees sit in an anteroom. The path to the *garbhagrha* is spiral, moving in a clockwise direction so that the impure, left side of the body is facing away from the image of the divine.



▲ **Figure 6.18** Swaminarayan temple in Gujarat, India

murti
image of the deity

ACTIVITY 6.9

1. Using your preferred online search engine, search for 'Your first visit to a Hindu temple'.
   This website explains what you would encounter if you were to visit a Hindu temple. Create a list of the protocols that a visitor to the temple would need to observe.
2. Watch the two videos at the links http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7468 and http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7469. Answer the following questions:
   a. What do the Hindus in the video clips do prior to entering the temple? Why?
   b. What is the reason for the bell-ringing? What sound is it supposed to mimic?
   c. What is involved in the puja ritual in this temple? Why is it important to understand the god as a personality?
   d. What is important about circumambulating the god with the right-hand side of the body?
   e. What universal symbol is used for purifying?
   f. Explain the significance of the flowers and food.
   g. What is the role of images and icons in Hindu worship?
   h. How is an adherent's spirituality awakened? Explain.

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Directly above the *garbhagrha* is the shikhara, or tower, which symbolises the sacredness of the temple and represents the leading of the mind towards liberation.

At the entrance to the temple, there is generally a separate shrine that houses the guardian of the deity. When Hindus visit temples, they perform their individual puja (worship) or join in with larger groups of worshippers. Because the *mandir* is a sacred place, devotees and visitors must remove their shoes and the soles of the feet must face away from the deity. Many devotees will prostrate themselves before the deity with their arms stretched over their heads and palms together in a gesture of humility. Others will circle the temple three times, with the temple on their right side as a mark of respect.

Puja

The word **puja** means paying respect or homage to the gods through various actions that express the wish to please the deities, serve them and receive blessings in return. Puja rituals are the same whether at home or in a temple. In every home, an area is set aside for a shrine, which may be a room or a shelf in a corner. While usually performed by women, puja can involve the whole family and takes place morning and evening. A home shrine would normally include statues, pictures or images of gods and goddesses. The other items used during puja can include:

- incense
- red kum-kum powder, sandalwood paste and yellow turmeric powder
- fruit offerings or sweetmeats
- ghee lamp
- arti lamp
- bell
- copper container of water from the Ganges
- flowers.

Puja actions

- As a sign of respect, those taking part in puja bathe and dress in clean clothes as a symbol of both outer and inner cleansing.
- A bell is rung and prayers chanted to invite the deities to be present.
- The deities are offered a special seat and welcomed as honoured guests while a water offering is made.
- The deities are bathed using panchamrit (a mixture of milk, yogurt, sugar, honey and butter), then washed in clean water, dried and given clothes that are specially made to fit the images.
- Red kum-kum powder, turmeric, sandalwood paste and rice are put on the deities as a symbol of relaxation.
- Flowers are laid before the deities or placed over them. The flowers should be offered in a particular way: the five fingers of the right hand pick up the flower gently, then the fingers are turned upward with the flower, which is offered at the deities' feet.
- Incense sticks are lit, symbolising the destruction of selfish desires.
- The ghee lamp is lit and waved before the deities.
- Fruits and foods are offered and coconut and betel leaves may be arranged around the deities.
- The arti ceremony is then performed. This lamp containing five cotton-wool wicks dipped in purified butter, representing the five elements of earth, air, wind, water and fire, is lit and rotated around the deities while a bell is rung. Devotees symbolically accept the light and blessing of the gods by passing their hands over the flame and then over their head: an action that symbolises the desire to receive enlightenment.

puja
Hindu devotional worship often involving the use of a *murti* (image)

All the practices of puja are performed to bring the presence of the deities into the home and to assist the worshipper to concentrate and seek wisdom. The purpose of puja is not to ask for favours, but to offer the deities homage and entertainment. The images of the deities, whether they be a statue or a picture, are treated as if they are the god him/herself.

▲ **Figure 6.19** Puja offerings

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ACTIVITY 6.10

1 Follow this link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7470 and watch the clip on how to perform puja at home.
   a The clip makes mention that the devotee must be clean before entering into the ritual of puja. Ritual cleansing is also important in Islam. Why do you think this is an important step in prayer in these two religions?
   b The clip shows the bathing of the deity in milk and water. Explain in your own words why this occurs.
   c Compare the details in this textbook and the information on the video. Explain how and why these might differ and why this is acceptable for puja.
2 Access this link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7468 and watch the clip of children visiting a Hindu temple.
   a After examining both clips, describe how the ritual of puja in the home is similar to, or different from, puja within the temple.
   b If the ritual of puja can be performed at home, why would a devotee of Hinduism go to a Hindu temple?

Sacred Texts: Vedas and Upanishads

The **Vedas**, which means 'knowledge' or 'sacred lore', are the oldest of the Hindu sacred texts and are a collection of the oral traditions. The Vedas consist of four works: the *Rig Veda*, the oldest, and three other texts known as the *Sama Veda* (hymns), the *Yajur Veda* (sacrificial formulas) and the *Atharva Veda* (magical spells and incarnations). The *Rig Veda* is largely an anthology of poems addressed to various gods and constantly mentions a powerful and mysterious power called *Brahman*, which gives the sacrifice its efficacy. While some modern scholars see these hymns as essentially polytheistic, traditional Hindu scholars see the hymns as manifestations of the many different aspects or faces of *Brahman*. A later addition to the Vedas, the **Upanishads**, contains philosophical and religious ideas from the meditative traditions.

The Upanishads are a collection of more than 100 written works that record insights into reality. It is generally understood that the term 'Upanishad' means 'sitting near' or 'a session', and so the Upanishads emerged from the spiritual experience of the student sitting near the master and learning techniques for achieving religious experience. The Upanishads, unlike the Vedas, which are intended for hereditary priests, are for anyone who has the necessary experience to be a spiritual master and are written in dialogue form, including prose and poetry, and recount the beliefs of the Aryan peoples as they spread further east and south into Indian territory.

Important ideas that developed in the Upanishads include *Brahman*, *Atman*, *maya*, karma and *moksha*, which are core concepts in Hindu spirituality. The Upanishads insist that *Brahman* is something that can be known – not just believed in – but that it cannot be fully put into words. *Brahman* is not a god, but above all gods, and the gods derive their power from *Brahman*. The Upanishads say that experiencing the timelessness of *Brahman* can bring an end to everyday suffering and fear of death.

The Upanishads refer to the everyday world as ***maya***, or illusion, which should be interpreted as meaning both 'magic' and 'matter'. The model of the world presented in the Upanishads is like a great consciousness rather than a machine with moving parts. Death, therefore, is not a tragedy because, when one life form is lost, it is reborn into another. This is the beginning of the development of the concept of reincarnation.

The idea of rebirth recognises that people can be reborn either as humans or as animals, depending how people behave. What determines a person's rebirth is **karma**, which means 'to do' and includes the moral consequences of actions performed. Karma also explains why some people are born with great advantage while others have relatively nothing.

Moksha, from the word 'released', is the Hindu concept of final liberation from the cycle of reincarnation, and according to the Upanishads is the ultimate goal of human life. *Moksha* also includes liberation from the limitations of the individual, and one means of attaining *moksha* can be to leave home in order to focus on ascetic practice so that one can go beyond the limited self to know the sacred reality.

Vedas
the four ancient texts that constitute the oldest and most sacred stratum of Hindu sacred writings

Upanishads
collections of Hindu philosophical writings that are attached to the Vedas but move beyond their emphasis on ritual by seeking the meaning of human existence

maya
the Hindu belief that the everyday world is an illusion and that the distinction between the self and the universe is a false dichotomy

karma
the effects of one's actions in life, good or bad; the natural consequences of actions

moksha
Hindu concept of final liberation from the cycle of reincarnation

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Dietary Requirements

▲ **Figure 6.20** Ghee, or clarified butter, is considered pure.

Hinduism places a special emphasis on food, so much so that a common greeting, 'Have you eaten?', is like asking 'How are you?' Many food customs are concerned with whether the food is raw or cooked; boiled or fried; grown above ground or below ground; prepared at home or elsewhere. People generally abstain from strong food such as onions and garlic, which are thought to stimulate improper desires and, therefore, hamper moral behaviour. Some Hindus abstain from alcohol, but there is no ban on the consumption of alcohol, in contrast to Islam.

Hindu food laws are focused on protecting the believer from spiritual pollution and so it is important that a devout Hindu eats the correct food, prepared in the correct manner and consumed in appropriate company. The complex **caste** laws of Hinduism apply in a particular way to food and eating. The cooking must take place in an unpolluted environment. The kitchen is generally considered the purest room in the house and often household *murtis* are stored there. Strangers, lower-caste people and animals are not permitted to enter the kitchen. The kitchen, generally located on the first floor of the house, is cleaned and purified daily and the person preparing the food must bathe before cooking and wear clean clothes.

The caste of the cook is also important: upper-caste cooks and waiters are in high demand in temples and restaurants because members of upper castes cannot accept food cooked for them by members of lower castes. Caste laws require people of the same caste to eat together and so devout Hindus are cautious about eating communally.

Some foods are considered pure, particularly those from cows: these include milk, yogurt and clarified butter or ghee. Food that is fried in ghee is considered more pure than food that is prepared in water, because of the potential for pollution. Fried foods are classified as ***pukka*** and can be eaten outside the home and sometimes across caste boundaries. Boiled foods, classified as ***katcha*** (poor quality), must be prepared in one's own kitchen for the sake of purity.

caste
class structure

pukka
genuine

katcha
poor quality

ACTIVITY 6.11

1. Hindu people often greet each other by noting if the other person has eaten. This is quite a different greeting from many cultures. Why do you think that knowing if you are hungry is important to a Hindu?
2. Rules about eating certain foods and abstaining from other foods are common to many religions. Why do you think Hindus are very particular about the 'spiritual pollution' that some foods can bring to a devout Hindu?
3. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7471 and watch the clip on Hindu food requirements.
   a. List the different categories of foods and why they can or cannot be consumed by a devout Hindu.
   b. Explain how the cow has become a sacred animal for Hindus. In your explanation, mention the five uses of cow products in Hindu worship.
   c. The clip notes that food is often placed at Hindu altars. Why would a devout Hindu do this?
   d. Explain what the following food terms mean: *tamasic*, *rajasic* and *sattvic*. Why are some more acceptable for different castes than others?
   e. Identify the impact that onions and garlic are believed to have on those who eat them and explain, with justification, the rules associated with their consumption.
   f. Hindus are forbidden to consume beef and beef products. To what extent is this statement accurate?
   g. The kitchen is the most important room in a Hindu's household. To what extent do you agree with this? Provide reasons to justify your response.
   h. What are some issues associated with trying to have uniform food laws in Hinduism? Explain, using examples to support your points.

Hinduism is a complex amalgam of the traditional practices of the Indian people, but its history spans thousands of years. Hinduism has no founder, and no official canon of scripture. For traditional Hindus, there is no separation between religious and secular activity and no significant distinction between religion and culture.

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6.4 Buddhism

▲ **Figure 6.21** Thai Buddhist monks

Buddhism is more accurately described as a spiritual tradition rather than a religion. Buddhists follow the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, a man born in northern India in approximately 6 BCE. They believe that after a time of searching he reached **enlightenment** and became the Buddha. The Buddha is not a god and followers do not express a belief in a personal god. Buddhists believe that nothing is fixed or permanent and that life is an endless cycle of impermanence, suffering and uncertainty. Buddhists seek to reach a state of **nirvana** by following the path of the Buddha.

In some lineages (branches) of Buddhism, people believe that everyone has the potential to attain enlightenment. There are two major lineages of Buddhism: Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism.

Theravada Buddhism

Theravada Buddhism, known as the way of the elders, is practised in Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. Its name comes from *vada* (the way) and *thera* (elders) and in this conservative lineage Buddhists believe that they pass on the Buddha's teachings unchanged.

Monks are at the heart of Theravada Buddhism and there is a significant difference between monks and lay people; in fact, Theravada Buddhism does not believe that laypeople can attain nirvana and so the life of a monk, which focuses on detachment and meditation, is a surer path. Monks follow all of the Ten Precepts while lay people only need follow the first five. Lay people should provide for the needs of monks, particularly their need for food. By providing for the monks, people receive good karma. The teachings of Theravada Buddhism are contained in the Pali Canon. The Tipitaka (Pali) or Pripitaka (Sanskrit) is a collection of three sets of writings sometimes referred to as the Three Baskets.

enlightenment
gaining insight or wisdom that informs or instructs the individual

nirvana
literally 'blowing out'; in Buddhism the goal of religious practice

Theravada
'those who hold the doctrine of the elders'

Mahayana
literally the 'great vehicle'

Mahayana Buddhism

Mahayana means 'great vehicle'. The term 'great or large vehicle' describes the more comprehensive outlook taken by Mahayana Buddhists, who believe that all people, regardless of their gender and social status, have the capacity to become enlightened and that enlightenment is a call to compassion. While Mahayana Buddhists agree that

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the Buddha was an enlightened man, they are not overly concerned about the history and life of the Buddha: what is important to them is the Buddha's enlightenment. The pairing of wisdom and compassion (*karuna*) is important in Mahayana Buddhism because to care for someone else is to care for oneself.

In Mahayana Buddhism, nirvana has a more altruistic character than in Theravada Buddhism because there is no gap between nirvana and **samsara**: nirvana is samsara, and samsara is nirvana. In Theravada Buddhism, nirvana is the absence of self-centredness and, therefore, the absence of suffering. While Mahayana holds this interpretation, it adds the state of spiritual perfection of total compassion and concern for others.

Teachings

None of the teachings of the Buddha were written down when the Buddha was alive and the texts we have today were recorded hundreds of years later. Even at the time of the Buddha, there were multiple interpretations of the stories as well as translations in different languages. Two of the most common languages used are Pali and Sanskrit. Core to the teachings of the Buddha are **The Three Jewels** (Tiratana [Pali]; Triratna [Sanskrit]): the Buddha, the Dharma (the teaching) and the Sangha (the monastic community).

Sacred Texts: Tipitaka – the Three Baskets

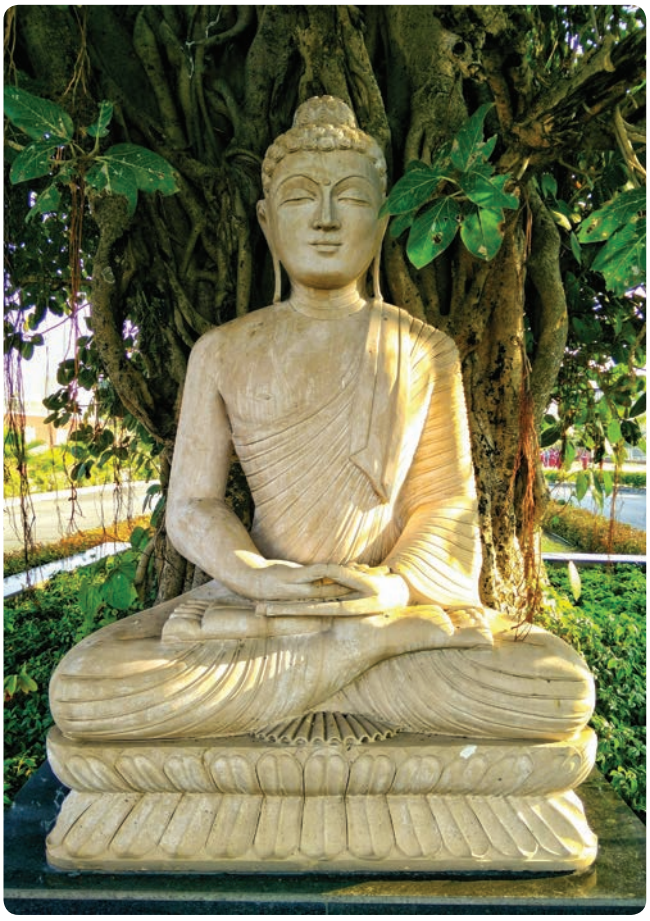
The first basket, the Vinaya Pitaka, is the smallest and consists of lists of rules for monastic life. It includes 227 rules for monks (*bhikkhus*) and 311 rules for nuns (*bhikkhunis*), covering subjects such as simplicity and celibacy. The Vinaya is divided into three sections: the first section, the Sutta-vibhanga, contains rules, explanations and commentaries for *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis*; the second section, Khandhaka, deals with regulations for communal living (*kamma-vacana*) as well as rules for clothing and food; and the third section, Parivara, contains extra precepts that vary from school to school. The rules are recited every two weeks in monasteries throughout the world. The rules are designed so that the individuals in the Sangha can live in harmony together, and are more like guidelines than rules.

Beliefs

Three Marks of Existence

The Three Marks of Existence or Three Eternal Truths of Buddhism are:

- *anicca*: nothing is fixed, everything is changing
- *anatta* (no permanent identity or no self): all existence is interdependent so when conditions change, people also change
- *dukkha* (suffering): all life is suffering because the world is unable to satisfy people's desires.



▲ **Figure 6.22** A statue of the Buddha meditating

Four Noble Truths

Legend holds that the Buddha announced the **Four Noble Truths** to his five disciples in his first sermon. While each truth can be named in a single word, the concepts need elaboration.

1 *Dukkha: all life involves suffering.* This refers to several ideas: the first is that human life is permeated by suffering, which can include pain, sickness, old age or even death. It is not that people never experience pleasure nor that they are in constant pain, but people need to realise

samsara
the cycle of perpetual flux; a term used to designate the entire cycle of transmigration

The Three Jewels
the three most precious items in Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (his teaching) and the Sangha (the monastic community)

Four Noble Truths
the four key principles of the historical Buddha's teachings

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that all life experiences are transient and, therefore, they never really enjoy anything fully because they know that it will not last.

2 *Tanha: the origin of suffering is craving.* Craving or desiring power, wealth and self-image is one of the drivers of suffering. It is grasping for things that we do not possess that creates an inner emptiness, which the Buddha says leads to suffering.

3 *Niroda: the cessation or end of suffering.* The Buddha taught that the only way to end suffering was for desire to be extinguished and for a person to gain inner satisfaction. If people are able to end their suffering (*dukkha*), then nirvana (*nibbana*) or peace is achieved. A person who has achieved nirvana may still continue living, as the Buddha did, but their actions are motivated by selflessness. Nirvana is not the same as extinction and does not mean that people feel nothing; rather, it is a state of happiness, and while people still experience pain and pleasure, they do not respond to them as if they were unenlightened.

4 *Magga: the Middle Path or Way.* This is called the Eightfold Path and is set out as eight steps or features of Buddhist life. These are not eight separate steps, but simultaneous dimensions to be cultivated.

Eightfold Path

▲ **Figure 6.23** Dharma Wheel

The **Eightfold Path** is the middle way of living for Buddhists that avoids extremes and encourages a simple approach to life.

1 *Right understanding* involves developing a philosophical understanding of life and comprehending the first three Noble Truths.

2 *Right thought* involves developing thought or intention to follow the Buddhist path to liberation with diligence. Because thoughts lead to actions, people need to reform thoughts in order to reform behaviour.

3 *Right or perfect speech.* Buddhists must abstain from using speech that adds to suffering in the world. They should avoid:
- telling lies
- spreading gossip
- speaking harshly
- time-wasting chatter.

4 *Right or perfect conduct or action.* This is action that causes no harm and tries to lead a person to liberation. Buddhists should refrain from:
- harming or killing
- stealing
- taking intoxicants
- sexual misconduct.

5 *Right livelihood.* Work should benefit others rather than harm them; for example, arms dealing and selling intoxicating drinks should be avoided.

6 *Right or perfect effort.* This involves the effort to prevent negative thoughts or craving and create a healthy state of mind.

7 *Right or perfect mindfulness.* This is the deepening of mindfulness, which leads to a focused state of consciousness such as being aware of emotions, motives and actions. It begins by paying close attention to breathing with the aim of focusing the mind on what one is doing.

8 *Right or perfect concentration.* This is the practice of deep concentration and meditation that enables a person to develop loving-kindness and gain insight into the truths of life. The ultimate goal is nirvana.

Practices

Right conduct is guided by the **Ten Precepts**, a moral code given to the disciples as a guide for everyday living.

1 Do not destroy life.
2 Do not steal.
3 Do not commit adultery.
4 Do not tell lies.
5 Do not take intoxicants.
6 Do not eat after midday.
7 Do not dance or sing or act on a stage.
8 Do not use perfumes.
9 Do not use a high or broad bed.
10 Do not receive gold or silver (do not handle money).

Buddhist monks and nuns are expected to follow all 10 precepts, while lay Buddhists need only follow the first five precepts.

Eightfold Path
one of the principal teachings of the Buddha, who describes it as the way leading to the end of suffering and the achievement of self-awakening

Ten Precepts
fundamental Buddhist values related to ethical and moral teaching

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▲ **Figure 6.24** Chung Tian Temple, Brisbane

Rebirth

For Buddhists, life is a process of rebirth. The sources speak of six domains, or 'realms', into which an individual can be reborn. Some of these realms are visible to people now, others are not.

Temple

Early Buddhist monks were itinerant and during the wet season they stayed in huts or caves. As Buddhism expanded, wealthy patrons built permanent homes for them, which were located near towns so that alms could be given but the monks were far enough removed from the town to allow for peace and quiet for meditation.

The architectural style of temples varies according to culture, with some buildings resembling palaces. Usually, a monastery has a study hall, a library and a guest area for the laity to attend classes. An important part of any Buddhist temple complex is the main shrine hall, which contains images of the Buddha. The space is usually highly decorated and, depending on the lineage of Buddhism, may include images of **bodhisattvas** such as Amitabha.

Many statues or images of the Buddha have the Buddha's hands in different positions. These positions of the Buddha's hands (*mudras*) indicate different themes. One hand placed on top of the other with the palms facing upwards indicates concentration and meditation; a hand in front of the chest indicates instruction; and a hand touching the ground indicates resistance to temptation.

Another building in the temple complex is the **stupa**. The stupa houses relics and ashes of the dead. Stupas are tall and usually bell-shaped. In South Asia and Tibet, they consist of five layers representing the five essential elements of the universe: earth, water, fire, air or wind, and ether/spirit.

bodhisattva
enlightened being

stupa
bell-shaped construction that stores relics of the dead

Shrines

Many Buddhists have a Buddha *rupa* or image of the Buddha on a high shelf in their home and often use the image as a focus for meditation. When standing before a Buddha *rupa*, Buddhists join their hands, bow before the image and touch their forehead, mouth and chest with their hands together as a reminder that mind, speech and body are all involved in devotion. All shrines are highly decorated and at the centre of the shrine is a statue of the Buddha (Mahayana shrines include a variety of Buddha images). Common features across the various traditions include:

- statue of the Buddha
- flowers – symbols that life is short (some traditions use green vegetation)
- water – a symbol of respect and reverence
- candles – symbols of enlightenment
- incense – to purify the air and symbolise the Dharma being spread throughout the world
- bell – to separate the sections of the ceremony and as a symbol of karma
- food – some traditions offer food.

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Shrines are prepared and treated with great care and respect, cleaned daily, food and flowers are replaced, and the water offered may even be recycled into tea water. The objects presented on the shrine stimulate the senses and attempt to involve the whole of the person in the ritual.

ACTIVITY 6.12

1. Use a search engine to find information on the etiquette for guests visiting a Buddhist temple.
   Create a poster for would-be travellers advising them of the protocols for visiting a Buddhist temple. Try to make your poster easy to read and remember!
2. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7473 and examine the website, which shows many different Buddhist temples.
   a. After looking at the different temples, list what you think Buddhist temples have in common.
   b. Conduct some research to find out how the construction of the stupa explains the different beliefs of the temple.
3. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7474 and watch the clip on the Chung Tian Buddhist Temple in Brisbane.
   a. After watching the clip, use a '3, 2, 1' strategy to record three things you learned about Buddhist temples, describe two insights you have gained into Buddhist practices and formulate one question related to Buddhism.
   b. There are many activity areas at the temple, including a tea ceremony room and a calligraphy room. Why would the temple include these activity rooms and make them available to the public?
   c. Conduct some research on the architecture and floor plans of Buddhist temples and then draw and label a floor plan.

ACTIVITY 6.13

1. Use an online search engine to find instructions on how to build a simple Buddhist shrine.
   a. The instructions note that there must be three levels to the shrine. What would you place on each of the three levels?
   b. What can a devotee of Buddhism do if they wish to make an altar but do not have a statue of Buddha?
   c. Design your own wiki, PowerPoint or video clip explaining the importance of the home shrine to a Buddhist and how to make a shrine in the home.
2. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7476 and watch the clip that details how to establish a personal shrine. Using this information and conducting more research if required, create a brochure that details how to create a personal shrine. You may also source various elements required using local shops or online suppliers to provide a costing.

Dietary Requirements

According to Buddhism, the body should neither be pampered nor neglected. Buddhist monks and nuns, therefore, eat responsibly. They fast or do not eat after midday. The Ten Precepts guide the lives of Buddhists. The first and the fifth precepts are particularly significant in relation to dietary requirements. The first precept, to refrain from killing living creatures, covers more than human beings and extends to all forms of life. Violence is to be avoided and the killing of animals is prohibited. An issue is: should all Buddhists be vegetarian? There are a variety of positions held. Tibetan Buddhists are not total vegetarians because to grow vegetables in a cold climate is difficult. Red meat is sometimes consumed, but it is preferred to kill a large animal so that many people are fed and, therefore, minimising the contravention of the ahimsa principle of not harming. Some Japanese Buddhist groups, such as Shingon and Tendai, also eat meat, but Vietnamese and Chinese monks usually refrain from all meat as well as spices such as onion, garlic and leek because they are thought to stimulate sexual desire if eaten cooked and to provoke anger if eaten raw.

Theravada Buddhism makes the distinction between 'blameful' and 'blameless' meat. Blameless meat is when the monk has not witnessed the killing of the animal; the monk has not been told that the meat has been prepared specially for him; and the monk does not suspect that such a meal was being prepared. Direct involvement in the killing of the animal is bad karma, so butchering is an inappropriate occupation for Buddhists.

The fifth precept, to refrain from intoxicants, implies abstinence from alcohol and other drugs. Monks and nuns are expected to abstain from alcohol but lay Buddhists may partake of alcohol as long as they do not overindulge so as

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▲ **Figure 6.25** Food prepared for monks

to cloud their judgement and reduce self-control. Buddhist concerns about meat and alcohol arise from the potential to bind the person to the wheel of samsara and thereby delay nirvana.

Buddhism is Eastern in origin, but has in the last 100 years or so increased its presence in the West. Many Buddhist ideas have become available to people who are not themselves practising Buddhists. Some of this influence occurs implicitly through statues of the Buddha in garden and gift shops. Engaged Buddhism has gained popularity more recently because of its involvement in the community.

ACTIVITY 6.14

1. Many Buddhists choose to follow a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle. Conduct some research to discover the difference between vegetarianism and veganism. Why might a Buddhist choose this lifestyle?
2. Some Buddhist communities refrain from eating meat, spices, garlic, onions and leeks. These foods are thought to provoke anger and sexual desire. In your own words, explain why you think this is a popular belief within Buddhism.
3. Conduct some research to find recipes that would be appropriate to use if a Buddhist was coming to your home for dinner.

6.5 Conclusion

We live in a diverse world and it is important to have a basic understanding of the religious beliefs and practices of the major world religions. When we understand something of the religious other, we are able identify the distinct features that make each religion unique and at the same time we can appreciate the common ground between religions.

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End of Strand Activities

Beliefs

1. Being compassionate and acting justly is a key way of understanding God's manifestation in the modern world. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7477 for the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council website. In groups, select one of the previous year's Social Justice Statements and explore the resources available.

   Your task is to explain and present to your class the key aspects of the social justice issue you have selected. To do this, you need to consider resources beyond this website. You may present your information as a multimodal, selecting a mode of presentation that fits with your focus: this may be a community activity, working through a booklet, creating a video or something other. You need to contextualise your presentation by linking your social justice issue to God's presence in the world: find a scripture passage, some poetry or art work that resonates with the presentation. Conclude your presentation with a prayer you have written.
2. In Luke's parable of the Good Samaritan, we are told that the lawyer is really wanting to know, 'Who does not deserve my love? Whom can I hate?' In a world that is still divided on race, ethnicity and religious beliefs, this is easy to relate to. The media bombards us with messages of fear and hatred, division and separation.

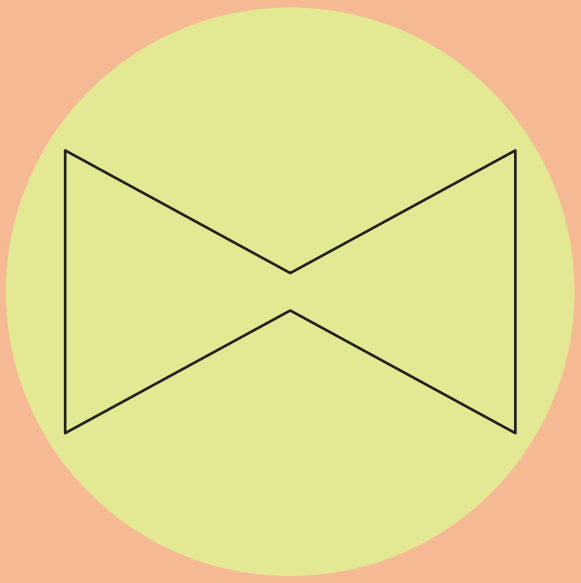
   In pairs, research a recent issue or situation reported in the media that employed the language and images of hate and fear to create division and justify withdrawal of love, compassion and mercy. Use this as the basis of recontextualising the parable of the Good Samaritan. With your partner, create either a script for a short play or a children's picture story book that brings the parable into the reality of the 21st century.

Human Existence

1. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7478 and watch the clip. As a class, discuss the idea that 'mystery presents people with an invitation to know and understand more deeply'.

   Halfway through the video, at approximately three minutes, the galaxies that have been mapped so far, at around 100 million years' light travel from earth, are identified. At about five billion years' light travel from earth, the video highlights what has been mapped and what is yet to be mapped; this indicates it is known there is more there, but we do not know what it is as yet.

   Your task is to use this example of mapping the known universe as a metaphor for understanding the mystery of God. In small groups, create a large circle on poster paper and 'map' what you know about God. You can use symbols, Bible verses from the chapter and other depictions of God to create your map. Decide what percentage of your map you will leave blank and justify your choices.



2. The notion of God's immanence (meaning to 'remain in', and indicating that God remains in creation and therefore is present everywhere through the acts of continuing creation) can be a little daunting if we consider it in abstract terms; however, if we select an example of God's physical presence, we can begin to grasp the enormity of God's presence.

   You are to select an aspect of the natural world where you feel or experience God's presence, such as the ocean, wildflowers, the animal kingdom, etc., and create a visual calendar that pictorially highlights God's immanence. You can do this electronically or by creating a hard copy. You may use words or quotes from scripture to support your representation of God and you must write an introduction or preface explaining the purpose of your calendar. (Microsoft Word has a template from a Picture Calendar that is simple to use.)
3. Use the information in the chapter on Human Existence to examine the different ways that God has been written about and depicted across time. Put yourself in the position of an art curator who has been asked to put together a folio of possible artworks that could potentially be used in schools and churches. Compile a dossier of images that demonstrate the different types of depictions of God. Annotate the images in your dossier by pointing out artistic choices that have been made and any scriptural references that might be evident in the image.

World Religions

1. The world religions studied in this section share many similarities and differences. These include food rituals, fasting, use of sacred spaces and prayer rituals. Choose one of these aspects and conduct some research for designing a PowerPoint that explains how each of these religions demonstrates this aspect. Within your PowerPoint, explain why you believe this aspect is important to the religion selected.

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2. Your school has been invited to provide the catering for an interfaith event and your class has been tasked with the role of creating a menu for the participants. You need to keep in mind that coming together to share food is an important ritual in all traditions and is a way of unifying diverse groups of people.

   In small groups, you will need to conduct research to ensure the food you provide caters for a variety of needs and religious requirements. Create an extensive menu for an entire day, including morning and afternoon tea and lunch. You will need to have food and beverages. Decide if you will exclude particular foods and why, how the foods will be presented and if any foods will not be placed on the same tables.

   Finally, you can decide on a theme, create menus, decorations and include a colour scheme to enhance your banquet.

   You may present your plan to your peers as a PowerPoint presentation or a brochure.

3. The same event has just received notification that the school that was to create the sacred spaces is no longer attending the event. Your class has been asked to develop five separate spaces for worship and quiet reflection for each of the major religions in attendance.

   Divide the class into five groups and allocate one of the main religious traditions. You are to conduct some research to assist you in deciding what you will need to include in your 1x1.5 m space to make it sacred and special for the adherents attending the symposium.

   As a group, you need to create a model or diorama of the sacred space you are providing. Present this to the class, explaining and justifying your choices.

4. You have been hired as a consultant and must advise a restaurant chain as it embarks on introducing a halal food line to its menus. As part of your consultation, you must do the following:
   a. Create a presentation that provides extensive information around halal food, what is acceptable and appropriate preparation.
   b. Submit to the restaurant a sample menu that would be considered halal – it must be appropriate for 'dine-in' and takeaway.
   c. Conduct a SWOT analysis for the chain in relation to introducing a halal section to its menu. Make some recommendations in relation to whether the chain should add to its current menu or embark on a sister chain that serves halal food only.

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3 Church

The Curriculum strand, 'Church', encompasses three areas:

- Liturgy and Sacraments
- People of God
- Church History.

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CHAPTER 7

Liturgy and Sacraments

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The Church is a sign of the presence and work of God within the world. More specifically, the Church is a community of people called to recognise and cooperate with the work of God. They do this by expressing their faith in a variety of ways, particularly through prayer and action. The Church is made up of people like us and, as part of the world, it is in continual need of God's grace and reform in response to that grace.

7.1 Sacraments

Sacraments are symbols of God's love and are central to Catholic belief and identity. Sacraments are described as 'efficacious symbols', which means they point to and affect what they represent: they make visible the mystery of God's love for people. Jesus, for example, not only signifies God's love for people, Jesus is God's love. Jesus' teaching, miracles and death on the cross all symbolise God's love for all people. The Church, too, is a sacrament because it is a sign of salvation, and through the Church people can encounter Jesus. Christians are called to be a sacramental people through their life and to be examples of the presence of God in the world.

Because people are made in the image of God, they are called to discipleship. Their discipleship is strengthened in the sacramental life of the Church community, especially in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Baptism initiates people into the Christian community and Eucharist nourishes and sustains people as they strive to live out the challenge of discipleship.

The sacraments support and celebrate definitive moments in a Christian's life: birth, belonging, forgiveness, reconciliation, thanksgiving, vocation, sickness, death and resurrection. They also bring meaning to important times in the lives of believers, and sustain people in their daily life. The sacraments operate within Jesus' relationship to humanity and are the external expression of Jesus' continued presence in people's lives.

Within the Catholic tradition, there are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, known as the Sacraments of Initiation; Penance and the Anointing of the Sick, known as the Sacraments of Healing; and Marriage and Holy Orders, known as the Sacraments of Commitment. In this section, we will focus on the sacrament of Eucharist.

sacraments
in general, any visible sign of God's invisible presence. Specifically, a sign through which the Church manifests and celebrates its faith and communicates the saving grace of God. In Catholic doctrine, there are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Marriage, Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick.

▲ **Figure 7.1** Eucharist is the final sacrament of initiation in the Catholic Christian tradition.

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7.2 The Last Supper

> [26]While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' [27]Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; [28]for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (Matthew 26:26–28)

At the Last Supper, Jesus and his apostles remembered and celebrated the Passover with the traditional Jewish ritual meal. The Israelites ritualised and remembered how God intervened in Israel's history and delivered them when they did not expect it. God showed mercy and compassion and formed a covenant with the Israelites. The Passover meal remembers and celebrates God's great love, care and nurturing.

In order to understand the Last Supper, we need to understand the Jewish Passover meal and what is celebrated in that meal: the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and God's continuing presence in the world as told in the Book of Exodus.

7.3 Passover (Pesach)

Passover (Pesach) is celebrated in spring during the Jewish month of Nisan. It is the first pilgrim festival of the year and lasts for seven days. The first and last days of Pesach are holy days, when no work, apart from the preparation of food, can be done (Exodus 12:16). The central event of Passover is the **Seder** – a joyous ritual meal celebrated with family. Jewish families try to include strangers at their Seder table or anyone who does not have a Seder of their own to attend as a reminder that all Jewish people were once 'strangers in Egypt'.

The central event of the Seder is the retelling of the Exodus from Egypt, the liberation from slavery and the wandering for 40 years in the wilderness before the Jewish people finally reached the Promised Land. Throughout the Seder ritual and daily liturgies of Passover, the Jewish people are constantly reminded that they were freed from captivity by the hand of G-d. The themes of slavery and freedom, as well as exile and home, predominate during Passover.

Seder
the meal that is celebrated on the first night of Pesach (Passover); from the Hebrew word for 'order'

When Moses demanded to know the name of God, God said to Moses 'Ehy-eh-asher-ehyeh' [I am who I am, YHWH] (Exodus 3:14). Traditionally, rather than uttering the sacred name YHWH, Jews say Adonai, Lord. This respect or prohibition is expressed in English as G-d.

▲ **Figure 7.2** A Jewish family celebrating Pesach

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Matzah (Unleavened Bread)

When the Israelites escaped from Egypt, after G-d had sent the 10 plagues on the Egyptians, they had little time to prepare and so did not wait for the yeast to rise in their bread dough. Instead, they made unleavened bread to take on the journey. To commemorate this series of events, Jews do not eat any form of chametz (wheat, barley, rye, spelt or oats, which expand when mixed with water) for the duration of Passover. More than that, people are instructed to clean all chametz from their homes. The preparations for Passover require great effort and it takes a number of days to prepare the home as all chametz must be removed from the house (Exodus 12:17–19).

Chametz is anything made from the five major grains (barley, wheat, oats, rye and spelt) that has not been completely baked within 18 minutes after coming into contact with water. Some observant Ashkenazi Jews avoid rice, corn, peanuts and beans during Passover as these are often processed with wheat and there is a fear that wheat may be mixed in.

The entire home, including the kitchen, must be cleaned and made chametz-free. Not only must all chametz be removed from the home, but any utensils or crockery that have come into contact with chametz must not be used during the festival. Some households have an entire set of kitchenware that is used exclusively for Passover so that the chametz rule can be strictly observed.

During the seven days of Pesach, **matzah** unleavened bread is eaten. Matzah is a grain product made of flour and water that is baked quickly so that it does not rise. Not eating chametz and eating matzah instead is a reminder of the Jews' dependence on G-d. Matzah is a symbol of freedom and is also known as the 'bread of affliction', the bread of the poor and humble.

matzah
Jewish unleavened bread used for Pesach

▲ **Figure 7.3** Matzah is unleavened bread eaten during the seven days of Pesach.

The highlight of Pesach is the Seder meal, which is celebrated on the first night of the festival and is full of meaning and symbolism. The word Seder means 'order' and in the centre of the table is the Seder plate, which contains a hard-boiled egg, a roasted bone, bitter herbs, charoset (a sweet paste made of fruit and nuts), parsley and a small dish of salted water. In addition, there is a plate containing three matzah covered with a cloth.

Families gather together for the Seder and it begins when the mother says the blessing while lighting the candles. The Seder revolves around the story of the Exodus and is told in a book called the *Haggadah*.

There are 14 elements to the Seder and they occur in a set order.

1 Kiddush – the Seder begins with the recitation of Kiddush (blessing over a glass of wine).
2 Urkhatz – a ritual washing of hands occurs before eating bread.
3 Karpas – parsley dipped in the salt water is blessed then eaten.
4 Yakhtz – the middle matzah from the centre of the table is broken in half. One part is hidden for the *afikoman*, to be eaten at the very end of the meal. The parents usually hide it for the children to find.
5 Maggid – the first part of the *Haggadah* is read. The youngest child present at the Seder asks a series of questions: 'Why is this night different from other nights?' This leads into four specific questions about the ritual:
   - Why on this night do we eat unleavened bread?
   - Why on this night do we eat bitter herbs?
   - Why on this night do we dip our herbs?
   - Why on this night do we recline?
6 Rakhtsah – hands are washed again, accompanied by a blessing.
7 Motzi matzah – the matzah is eaten accompanied by the blessing for unleavened bread and signals the beginning of the meal proper.
8 Maror – bitter herbs are dipped in the charoset and eaten accompanied by a blessing.
9 Korekh – a sandwich of bitter herbs and charoset on matzah is eaten.
10 Shukhan orekh – dinner is served and eaten.
11 Tsafun – the *afikoman* is eaten, officially ending the meal (after this no more food should be eaten).
12 Barekah – grace after meals is prayed.
13 Hallel – the remainder of the Hallel psalms are prayed.
14 Nirtzah – the celebration is accepted and those gathered declare 'next year in Jerusalem'.

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▲ **Figure 7.4** A family Seder meal

The whole ritual and meal lasts quite a few hours and sometimes does not end until the early hours of the morning.

The meaning of some of the symbols in the meal are quite obvious: the maror and salt water remind people of the bitterness of slavery and the tears of the Israelites. The

▲ **Figure 7.5** The Seder meal is celebrated on the first night of Pesach and is the highlight of the festival.

charoset is the mortar used by the Israelites when they made bricks, and the shank bone reminds people of the Paschal lamb's blood that marked the lintels of the doors so that the angel of death would pass over. It is also important that the participants retell the story of the Exodus and at several points in the ritual the people hear the words 'I am your G-d who brought you out of Egypt to be your G-d'. In the same prayer, people are instructed to teach the word 'to your children from generation to generation'.

ACTIVITY 7.1

1. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7479 and, using the Seder plate video, copy and complete the table below to show what is eaten during a Seder meal and what it represents.

Food	Hebrew name	What does it represent?
Bitter herbs (often horseradish)	Maror	
Hard-boiled (roasted) egg	Bietzah	
Parsley	Karpas	
Salted water or vinegar	*no Hebrew name*	
Lettuce	Hazeret	
Sweet fruit paste	Charoset	
Lamb shank	Zeroa	
Unleavened bread	Matzah	

2. Do your own research and create a flowchart to show the steps of the Seder meal.

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Seder plate food

Descriptions vary slightly, but include the following:

- *Karpas*: green vegetable, usually parsley, which is dipped into salt water to remind people of the tears of the slaves.
- *Charoset*: a mixture of chopped walnuts, grated apple, wine and cinnamon reminiscent of the mortar used by the Hebrew slaves when they toiled in Egypt.
- *Maror*: bitter herbs, usually horseradish, that represents the bitterness of slavery.
- *Beitzah*: a roasted egg (hard-boiled) and then rolled over a pan, a reminder of the sacrifices offered in the Temple as well as the continuity of life.
- *Zeroa*: a roasted shank bone that represents the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb.
- *Hazeret*: lettuce, symbolises enslavement in Egypt. At first, life appeared bearable, but eventually it became forced and cruel labour. The leaves of the lettuce are not bitter, but the stem often is.

The food on the Seder plate is very symbolic. Most of it is eaten, but two items are not consumed: the roasted egg and the lamb shank, which reminds people of the Paschal lamb slaughtered at Pesach.

Wine is also part of the Seder. When each of the 10 plagues is mentioned, each person at the table spills a drop of wine to express sorrow at the suffering of the Egyptians.

The Seder ends with the following words:

> The redemption is not yet complete …
> Peace, shalom …
> Next year in Jerusalem …
> Next year may all be free.

7.4 Eucharist

The Catholic Church teaches that **Eucharist** was established by Jesus on Holy Thursday during the Last Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23), and it is the central act of worship in the liturgical life of the Catholic Church.

> [24]and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' [25]In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' (1 Corinthians 11:24–25)

Eucharist
literally a 'thanksgiving'. The common name for the Mass or Lord's Supper. Also, the third sacrament in the process of Christian initiation.

In the Eucharist, the community of baptised people comes together to celebrate its unity in Jesus Christ and to share the community's faith in an ever-deepening way. Participation in the Eucharistic liturgy draws people to an ever-closer relationship with Jesus. This relationship flows through everything else in their lives. It gives meaning to everything they are and everything they do and strengthens them in their efforts to live their life in Christ.

The Eucharist is the final sacrament of the three Sacraments of Initiation and signals the full and complete initiation into the Catholic Christian tradition. Initially, in the early Christian communities the sacrament of Eucharist was intimately linked to baptism and confirmation, but between the 11th and 13th centuries the three rites of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist were developed into separate rites.

▲ **Figure 7.6** Artist's impression of the Last Supper

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The word 'Eucharist' comes from the Greek '*eucharistia*', meaning 'giving thanks', and literally is the thanks given for 'goodly gifts'. The etymology of 'eucharist' makes it clearer: '*eu*' means well or good as in euphoria and '*charis*' means gift. To say 'Eucharist' is to say 'the gift that you have given me is good'. The word was used in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem and denoted the most important point of sacrifices, the climax of the 'sacrifice of praise'. After the exile, a custom was introduced to the Temple where the act of sacrifice was accompanied by an act of thanksgiving. The thanksgiving became a ritual action that included a proclamation of the work of salvation accomplished by God. In Hebrew, it was called *todah* and when translated into Greek the word *eucharista* was used.

The celebration of the Eucharist is an act of the Church as the body of Christ. The Second Vatican Council, in the *Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy*, describes this act of the Church:

> At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted The Eucharistic Sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross through the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us. (no. 1323)

The Second Vatican Council also reminds people that there are four key concepts at the heart of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is:

1 a sacrament
2 a remembrance
3 an act of worship
4 a communion of fellowship.

The Eucharist is the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. It is the sacrament of His real presence. The Eucharist is the centre of the sacramental life of the Church community. For the Christian community, the accounts of the Last Supper are central to understanding Eucharist.

In the Catholic Christian tradition, Jesus is truly present in the community assembled for worship, the priest and the proclamation of the Word. In addition, Catholics believe that Jesus is present in a special way in the sacred species of bread and wine. The Church uses the word '**transubstantiation**' to express that at the consecration of the Mass the substance of the bread and wine becomes the Body and Blood of Jesus. For Catholics, Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament. In Catholic churches, the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a safe-like receptacle called a tabernacle, which is usually located behind the main altar or on a side altar. Catholics believe they are more closely united with Christ and to one another when they receive the Eucharist.

transubstantiation the official Catholic teaching, given at the Council of Trent, that the substance of the bread and the wine are changed into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood at the Eucharist

ACTIVITY 7.2

Consider the four key concepts related to Eucharist listed above. Read each of the scripture references listed below then copy and complete the table by recording evidence of the events from each story that depicts or implies remembrance, worship, celebration of a sacrament and communion of fellowship. Your teacher will clarify each of these concepts/terms if you need further explanation. Not all of them will be evident in each excerpt.

Key concept	Matthew 26:26–29	Mark 14:22–25	Luke 22:19–20	John 6:51–58	Acts 2:42	1 Corinthians 11:24–25
Remembrance						
Worship						
Celebration of sacrament						
Community of fellowship						

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▲ **Figure 7.7** For Catholics, Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament.

7.5 Eucharistic Liturgy

The Eucharistic Liturgy is filled with special signs that help people to convey and understand spiritual realities. These signs include the Word, and the bread and the wine.

The Word (scripture) is a powerful symbol that assists people to open their hearts to hear the Word of God speaking to them. Listening to the Word in the scripture readings also teaches people, through story, how to live as the children of God as well as reminding people of the salvation of Jesus.

Bread is a symbol of life. The consecrated bread of the Eucharist provides spiritual nourishment for Christians. The unleavened bread of the Eucharist is not only a reminder of the Passover, but it also reminds people that they are pilgrim people – people who are journeying towards God, dependent on God's love for nourishment and guidance.

The consecrated wine is Jesus' blood. Often in scripture, blood is a sign of uniting God with the people. Moses, for example, sprinkled the blood of an animal on the altar and the people as a sign of the consecration of the Jewish people to God. At the time of the Exodus, the lamb's blood smeared on the door saved the firstborn son from death. Jesus offered his blood as a sign of the new covenant between God and the people.

The Eucharist is a commemorative meal that recalls the Last Supper that Jesus celebrated with his disciples. The Passover meal reminded the people of God's goodness and fidelity in rescuing them from Egypt. When Jesus added to the ritual of the Passover, he encouraged people to remember his life, death and resurrection as a sign of the new covenant.

Christians of various denominations have debated whether the bread and wine are only symbols or whether the consecrated bread and wine really are the Body and Blood of Jesus. What is important is that the faith choice of the early communities was to use the words 'This is my body' (Matthew 26:26) and 'This is my blood' (Matthew 26:28) – they did not say 'let this be a reminder'. The emphasis in the gospel accounts is not on the objects on the communion table but rather on the relationship between the crucified-resurrected-exalted Jesus Christ and the group of believers that the Spirit energises. The emphasis is on the 'breaking' of bread and 'sharing' the cup. Catholic Christians

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are called to 'break themselves open' and 'share' with others. The early Christian writer, St John Chrysostom (c 345–407), wrote 'Through the food the Lord has given us, we become members of his flesh and of his bones. We are "mixed into" that flesh, and he has kneaded his body with ours'. Vatican II broadened people's understanding of God's presence in the Eucharist. It reminded people that Christ is present in: the assembled people, which unites them as his body; in the Word; in the priest; and in the bread and wine.

In Baptism, people enter into solidarity with the community of the faithful, and when they participate in the Eucharist they are challenged to share this communion of solidarity with others and with all of creation. In Baptism and Eucharist, Christians receive their identity as disciples and their vocation to be active in the world. The Eucharist is the sharing of the divine life with humanity. In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God shares everything with people. In return, people participate in this sharing when they share their lives with others.

The Eucharist is about hospitality. It reminds Catholic Christians that because they have received the Body and Blood of Christ, they must become the Body and Blood of Christ. They should therefore care for the elderly and sick, they should befriend the lonely and they should be the voice of righteousness in the world. When people celebrate the Eucharist, they are called to be bearers of an alternative voice within contemporary society. The Eucharist is a countercultural practice – it is the celebration of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

▲ **Figure 7.8** Bread and wine of the Eucharistic celebration

7.6 Structure of the Mass

The Mass, or the Lord's Supper, is where the people of God, together with a priest, celebrate the Eucharistic sacrifice. The Mass is a single act of worship made up of two parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

The Mass is communitarian in nature and there are dialogue responses between the priest and the congregation. The acclamations and responses of the people actively engage people in the liturgy. The Mass follows a particular ritual order.

Introductory Rites

The Mass begins with the priest processing into the sanctuary of the Church, often accompanied by a gathering song. The priest greets the assembly and the Penitential Rite, a time of reflection on one's sins and praying for God's mercy, follows. The introductory rite concludes with the Opening Prayer.

Liturgy of the Word

This part of the Mass contains readings from Sacred Scripture. The First Reading, usually from the Old Testament, is followed by the Responsorial Psalm selected from the Book of Psalms, where the congregation responds to a repeated antiphon. The Second Reading is from the New Testament. The Gospel Acclamation precedes a reading from one of the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke or John). After the readings, the priest delivers a Homily, which breaks open the Word for the gathered community. The Prayers of the Faithful, also known as the General Intercessions, follow. These are prayers of petition that seek God's guidance for the world and the local community.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist and communion are the most sacred parts of the Mass. The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the Presentation and Preparation of the Gifts of Bread and Wine. The priest prays the Prayer over the Gifts. As the Eucharistic Prayer begins, the congregation kneels as a sign of reverence for the most sacred part of the Mass. There are three acclamations during the Eucharistic Prayer – the *Sanctus*, or Holy, Holy, Holy, the Memorial Acclamation and the Great Amen – and they are often sung by the worshipping community. The congregation prays the Lord's Prayer and then, prompted by the priest, they offer each other a sign of peace using the greeting

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▲ **Figure 7.9** The distribution of Communion

'Peace be with you'. The *Agnus Dei*, or Lamb of God, is prayed when the Eucharistic Bread is broken and shared. The congregation processes to the front of the altar to receive Communion and then returns to their seat for silent prayer. The Liturgy of the Eucharist concludes with the Prayer after Communion.

Concluding Rite

The Concluding Rite contains the final prayers, blessing and dismissal. The Mass ends with the priest saying, 'The Mass is ended. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord'. The priest processes out, followed by the congregation.

ACTIVITY 7.3

1. Read the information about the Mass and the parts that make up the Mass. Copy and complete the table below to illustrate each part of the Mass and annotate your illustration by pointing out important people, objects, actions and words, as described in the text.

Introductory Rites	Liturgy of the Word
Liturgy of the Eucharist	Concluding Rite

2. Access the information located at the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7480.

   On the page, there are two images. One depicts the Last Supper and one depicts a modern-day celebration of the section of the Mass known as the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Explain how the photograph of the contemporary celebration displays evidence of the Liturgy of the Eucharist having derived directly from the Last Supper. Write a structured paragraph (topic sentence, evidence sentences and concluding sentence) of 150 words that explains how the Liturgy of the Eucharist emerged from the Last Supper. In preparation for your paragraph, first copy and record evidence in the table below.

Point of similarity	Evidence from the image

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7.7 History and Development of the Mass

The ritual associated with the celebration of the Lord's Supper has developed and expanded over the centuries. In the early Church, Christians met in people's homes, which indicates that there were at least some better-off Christians whose houses were big enough to host a group of people. In the East, Christians used a room under the roof (Acts 20:7–11), as the following extract shows:

> [7]On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight. [8]There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting. [9]A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in the window, began to sink off into a deep sleep while Paul talked still longer. Overcome by sleep, he fell to the ground three floors below and was picked up dead. [10]But Paul went down, and bending over him took him in his arms, and said, 'Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.' [11]Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left.

In the West, the meeting place was usually the dining room of a Roman house. From the end of the 2nd century, Christians donated houses that were used solely as places of worship. Churches began to be built from the middle of the 3rd century; the oldest known Christian building is a house church at Dura-Europos in Syria.

▲ **Figure 7.10** Basilica di Sant'Anastasia, Verona, Italy, was built in the late 3rd century.

ACTIVITY 7.4

1 In the 1920s, the site of Dura-Europos in Syria was excavated. Go online to search for the Dura-Europos archaeological excavation and examine photos from the excavated site.
   a Create a list of information about the site after examining the images and the location of the settlement.
   b The following map shows the location of Dura-Europos. What conclusions can be drawn about the spread of Christianity by the 3rd century? Consider the terrain and isolation of the community.

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 7.4 continued

The location of Dura-Europos, site of the oldest-known Christian building.

c What difficulties would have been experienced by the Christian community in Dura-Europos being so far from Jerusalem and other Christian areas? Considering that Christianity had spread to Syria, what does this reveal about people's devotion and belief in Christianity? How do you think the community managed to thrive in a Roman town?

2 Read the article about Dura-Europos via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7482.

a The article notes two major findings of the excavation, those being a synagogue and a house church. Why would this community have used a house church, not a designated church building, for worship? What does this reveal about this community and Christianity?

b Scroll down the page to the photo of the baptistery. Examine the photo. What information can be gathered about the sacrament of baptism as it was practiced at this time?

c The article makes mention of the difference in size and elaboration between the synagogue and the church. What do you think these differences indicate about the celebration of the Eucharist in the early church?

d The paintings unearthed in the house church depict scenes of Jesus walking on water and Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Why would these stories have been chosen to be permanent images in the house church?

e Another artwork that was uncovered in the excavation was that of a woman at the tomb of Christ. What does it reveal about this community? Why would they have included this artwork at that time?

3 From your reading about the house church at Dura-Europos and its location within the city, draw up a floor plan of the house church, including where you think the wall paintings would have been located – the altar area, baptistery and any other sections. You may need to revisit the information in this section as well as conduct your own research on house churches in the early church.

4 From your research and reading about house churches, how important were they in early Christianity?

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When the Church was young and not as centrally organised as it is today, the preparation and rituals varied according to time and place. Christians celebrated the Lord's resurrection every Sunday, the first day of the week. At the heart of the Christian Sunday was the celebration of the Last Supper, which Christians named Eucharist. This ritual enabled them to share in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The communicants received the consecrated bread in their hands. The bishop said 'The bread of heaven, Jesus Christ', to which the people responded 'Amen'. After gathering on Sunday, Christians took the Eucharist home and reserved the sacrament there so they could receive Communion before each meal.

The New Testament provides us with some information about the development of the ceremony of 'breaking bread'.

▲ **Figure 7.11** The breaking of bread

ACTIVITY 7.5

1 Copy the table below, read the scripture references and write what is learned about the breaking of bread.

Scripture reference	What is learned about the breaking of bread
Acts 2:42	
Acts 20:7–11	
Acts 27:35	
1 Corinthians 10:14–17	

2 Acts 20:7–11 notes a visit by Paul to one of his communities. Why do you think the writer of Acts included this passage and the unfortunate accident within the context of breaking bread?

3 1 Corinthians 10:14–17 makes a firm statement about the purpose of sharing the bread and wine. What is the writer emphasising in this passage about breaking bread?

4 1 Corinthians 11:17–33 is a detailed account by Paul to the community at Corinth about their abuse of the breaking-bread ceremony.
- a What abuses does Paul note are occurring within the breaking-bread ritual?
- b How does he envisage that the ritual should be conducted?
- c What is Paul's belief about breaking bread and sharing wine?

5 After examining each of the passages listed above, respond to the following:
- a What was the purpose of the breaking-bread ritual?
- b Why was it important to St Paul and the early church to have this ritual?
- c What was the format of the breaking-bread ritual?
- d How is the ceremony described in these scripture passages different or similar to the Eucharistic celebration that Catholic Christians have today?

We also have additional information about the structure of the celebration from Justin's **apology**, written in the 2nd century to the Emperor Antoninus Pius. The apology was in reply to the attacks of those who suspected Christian worship of immorality. From this text we have information regarding baptism and Eucharist in the 2nd century.

> And this food is called among us Εὐχαριστία [The Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the person who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and

apology
an ancient Greek term for a formally written defence of something

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from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, 'This do ye in remembrance of Me, this is My body'; and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, 'This is My blood'; and gave it to them alone. (First Apology, 66)

And we afterwards continually remind each other of these things. And the wealthy among us help the needy; and we always keep together; and for all things wherewith we are supplied, we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Spirit. And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday); and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration. (First Apology, 67)

▲ **Figure 7.12** Artist's impression showing Christ and the disciples at the Last Supper

ACTIVITY 7.6

1. Following your reading of the above text, use a dictionary to locate and define the following words:
   - Partake: _____
   - Regeneration: _____
   - Remission: _____
   - Sojourn: _____
   - Succour: _____
   - Transmutation: _____
2. Explain in your own words what you think is meant by the phrase 'For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God . . .'
3. Create a flowchart of the elements described in the text from the First Apology, 67, 'And we afterwards continually remind each other of these things . . .' to '. . . and in a word takes care of all who are in need'. You need to list each of the elements on your flowchart, using your own words.

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Hippolytus, a **presbyter** of the Church of Rome in the 3rd century, provided a framework that is now the basis of the Second Eucharistic Prayer.

> Let the deacons bring the oblation and the bishop with all the presbyters laying his hand on the oblation say, giving thanks, 'The Lord be with you'. And the people shall say 'And with your spirit.' 'Lift up your hearts.' 'We have them with the Lord.' 'Let us give thanks unto the Lord.' 'It is meet and right.'
>
> And then he shall continue thus:
>
> 'We give you thanks, O God, through your beloved child Jesus Christ, whom in the last times you did send to us a saviour and redeemer and messenger of your counsel, who is your word inseparable through whom you made all things and in whom you were well pleased, whom you did send from heaven into the Virgin's womb and who, conceived within her, was made flesh and demonstrated to be your Son, being born of Holy Spirit and a Virgin.
>
> 'Who, fulfilling your will and preparing for you a holy people, stretched forth his hands for suffering that he might release from sufferings those who have believed in you.
>
> 'Who when he was betrayed to voluntary suffering that he might abolish death and rend the bonds of the devil and tread down hell and enlighten the righteous and establish the ordinance and demonstrate the resurrection, taking bread and making Eucharist to you said: "Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you." Likewise also the cup, saying, "This is my blood which is shed for you. When you do this you make memory of me."
>
> 'Therefore, making memory of his death and resurrection, we offer you the bread and the cup, making Eucharist to you because you have bidden us to stand before you and minister as priests to you. And we pray you to grant to all your saints who partake to be united to you that they may be fulfilled with your Holy Spirit for the confirmation of their faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your child Jesus Christ, through whom glory and honour be to you with the Holy Spirit in your holy church now and forever, and world without end.'
>
> And the bishop shall give thanks according to this model. It is not altogether necessary for him to recite the very same words which we give before as though studying to say them by heart in his thanksgiving to God; but let each one pray according to his own ability. If indeed he is able to pray suitably with a grand and elevated prayer this is a good thing. But if on the other hand he should pray and recite a prayer according to a fixed form, no one shall prevent him. Only let his prayer be correct and right in doctrine. (*The Canons of Hippolytus*)

presbyters
an elder or minister of the Christian Church

▲ **Figure 7.13** An illustration of Hippolytus

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ACTIVITY 7.7

1. Copy the table below, then record the order of the framework described by Hippolytus. On the left-hand side, write each element in your own words and on the right-hand side draw an accompanying illustration.

Description	Illustration

2. Locate a copy of the Second Eucharistic Prayer online. Read the prayer, then compare this new prayer with the account by Hippolytus on the previous page. Copy and complete the table by recording similarities for comparison and evidence, then write your comparison in a structured paragraph of 100 to 150 words. Back up your points with evidence from the text.

Point of similarity	Evidence from the text/s

7.8 Conclusion

Eucharist is the central sacrament of Catholic Christianity and, in the remembering and doing, Christ becomes present to the gathered community. The sacrament of Eucharist is God's gift to believers who, together in community, gather, remember, celebrate, participate and reach out to others to bring Christ's presence to the world.

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CHAPTER 8

People of God

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Catholic Christians identify themselves as being People of God. As People of God, Catholics try to live their lives according to the teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is a large, worldwide institution that has, over time, developed a formal structure of leadership and a geographic organisation to assist in spreading the Word of God. In this section, we will explore different dimensions of the Catholic Christian Church. We will look at how the Church's authority is grounded in scripture and exercised through the College of Bishops – with the Pope as its head. We will discover how the Church is a service for teaching, pastoral support and leadership to all worldly members of the Church.

8.1 Ecclesiology

The study of the Church is called **ecclesiology**. When people study ecclesiology, they do not study an abstract understanding of the Church but, rather, they examine how the people who gather in a common faith and with a common mission live their lives as Church. There is a close connection between people's understanding of human existence, of God and of Jesus Christ and their understanding of Church.

Thousands of people each day pray the words of the Nicene Creed, which states: '… We believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church'. This statement is known as the four marks of the Church. The four marks are not characteristics of the Church; rather, they are qualities that Jesus the Christ shares with the Church through the Holy Spirit. References to the four marks of the Church can be found in scripture and early Church documents.

The Church is One

In Paul's Letter to the Ephesians we read: 'There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all' (Ephesians 4:4–6). Just as God is one in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so, too, is the Church one. The Church is one in the Holy Spirit, who dwells in those who believe.

▲ **Figure 8.1** The Church is diverse and unified.

ecclesiology
the theological study of the Church

From the beginning, the Church was diverse, with a multiplicity of people and cultures gathered together; but the Church was also unified, as is exemplified in this extract from Paul's Letter to the Corinthians: 'just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ' (1 Corinthians 12:12).

The Church is Holy

The world 'holy' means 'set apart' for a special purpose by and for God. The Church is holy because the Church lives in union with Jesus Christ, who is the source of all holiness, and through the Holy Spirit the Church leads others to holiness. The holiness of the Church is evidenced in the love that people who belong to the Church have towards one another and the contributions they make in the world.

The Church is Catholic

The word 'catholic' means universal. The Church is universal in two ways. First, the Church is catholic because all baptised people are part of the Church and the Church possesses the means of salvation. Second, the mission of the Church is universal because the Church has been sent to proclaim Christ to the entire human race. Jesus is recorded as saying in Matthew's gospel: 'I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age' (Matthew 28:18–20).

The Church is Apostolic

The Church can trace its beginning back to the apostles: therefore, the Church is considered apostolic. The Church also talks about apostolic succession, which means the popes and bishops are the successors of the apostles. The Church continues its apostolic mission and teaching under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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8.2 Discipleship

Jesus told the disciples to go and preach the Good News to all people and to pay particular attention to the poor and marginalised and welcome them into the community. The early church did not have the same structure as today, yet it too was shaped by its understanding of the call to proclaim the Word of God. While there were some members who served in a leadership capacity, the whole congregation was involved in the decision-making process. Local churches were guided by presbyters and some members were appointed by the community as overseers.

In the New Testament, we read that not everyone in the community has similar gifts and talents.

▲ **Figure 8.2** Church is community.

> [4]Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; [5]and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; [6]and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. [7]To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. [8]To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, [9]to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10]to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. [11]All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. (1 Corinthians 12:4–11)

Some of the gifts were for leadership or administration, others have a specifically charismatic character such as prophecy, but for the community to function well it needed all people to contribute.

ACTIVITY 8.1

Read the extracts from the New Testament listed below. What does each extract say about community and the contributions people make within community? Use quotes from the texts to support your claims.

- Romans 12:6–8
- 1 Peter 4:10–11
- 2 Timothy 1:6–7
- Romans 12:3–8
- 1 Corinthians 12:7

8.3 Ways of Seeing the Church

When people are planning a new building, inventing a new communication device or designing a new sports stadium, in addition to drawing plans, they often make small-scale models of what it will look like to assist people to see it rather than imagine it. Models help people to better understand complex ideas because they can see a physical representation of an idea even though the model does not fully explain it.

The Church is a complex expression of God's presence in the world. Cardinal Avery Dulles developed a series of models or images that he thought would assist people to better understand the Church and how it operates. The models are ways of seeing the Church as if looking through different lenses. Each lens provides a different aspect or insight into the Church. While the models are useful, we need to acknowledge that models do not tell the whole story, but they can assist us to see different perspectives rather than just examine something from one angle only.

The ancient Indian parable of the blind men with the elephant illustrates this point.

> A long time ago there were six blind men. One day they were told that an elephant was in their village. They had never seen or touched an elephant before so they decided they would go and touch the elephant in order to learn what it was like. One man touched the elephant's leg and said 'An elephant is like a large strong pillar.' Another touched the tail saying: 'No, it is like a rope.' The third

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touched its trunk: 'It is like the trunk of a tree.' The fourth touched its ear: 'An elephant is like a fan flapping in the breeze.' The fifth touched its belly: 'No, an elephant is like a long, strong wall' and the sixth man touched the elephant's tusk: 'An elephant is nothing like that, it is like a hard long pipe.' A heated argument broke out between the men before a wise man intervened saying: 'Each of you has only touched part of the elephant and you only have a partial impression of an elephant. What you need to do is talk to each other and combine all the partial views to get a full picture of the elephant.'

Like the blind men in the story, each of us has a particular understanding or image of the Church. What we need is a way of being able to see the Church from a variety of perspectives or lenses. Dulles' models provide one way of expanding our thinking related to the Church.

The six models or lenses are Church as: the People of God or Body of Christ; Institution; Sacrament; Herald of God's Word; Servant; and Community of Disciples. We will now explore each of these in detail.

▲ **Figure 8.3** Blind monks examining an elephant – ancient Chinese interpretation of the story

Church as the People of God or Body of Christ

In the New Testament, the Church is sometimes referred to as the Body of Christ. When the believers gather as a Church community, profess their faith, celebrate Eucharist together, serve the poor and care for others they become the body of Christ on earth.

Just like a physical body, all the parts of the body are dependent on each other. In the First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul refers to the different parts of the body of Christ.

> [12]For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. [13]For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
>
> [14]Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. [15]If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. [16]And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. [17]If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? [18]But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. [19]If all were a single member, where would

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the body be? [20]As it is, there are many members, yet one body. [21]The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' [22]On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, [23]and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; [24]whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, [25]that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. [26]If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

[27]Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. [28]And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. [29]Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? [30]Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? [31]But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. (1 Corinthians 12:12–31)

▲ **Figure 8.4** The people of God represent Christ in the world.

ACTIVITY 8.2

Read the text from 1 Corinthians 12:12–31 and answer the following questions.

1. The author of this text uses a central metaphor to explain the composition of people as the Church – what is this metaphor?
2. In what way does the phrase 'If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body", that would not make it any less a part of the body' prompt the reader to think about individuals and individual groups within the Church?
3. This section of the text 'The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you", nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you"', sums up the central message of 1 Corinthians 12:12–31. What is this central message? Write it down in your own words.
4. The many components making up one entity are depicted in various forms in the table. The third column depicts the Church. Schools are one component that make up the Church. Brainstorm other individuals and groups that make up some of the other components, then copy the table and write these in the final column.

Body	School	Church
Heart	Parents	
Hands	Teachers	Catholic schools
Feet	Administration staff	
Arms	Principal	
Legs	Board of Directors	

ACTIVITY 8.3

1. The organisations listed below carry out vital work caring for others in both the Church and wider society. Research each organisation, copy the table and record on the right the work they carry out and for whom.

Organisation	Its work in society
St Vincent de Paul Society	
Rosies	
Caritas	
Catholic Earthcare	
Faith Doing Justice	

2. What would be the result within the Church if this vital component did not exist?

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▲ **Figure 8.5** St Peter's Basilica, Rome

Just as people care for their own bodies, they must also take care of one another so that together as the People of God (the Body of Christ), the Church can be Christ in the world.

Church as Institution

The Church began as a small group of the followers of Jesus. As the group grew and spread the message of Jesus to various parts of the Roman Empire, they needed to develop structures to organise the mission and assist people to work together. As the Church expanded, it developed formal structures similar to local, national and international governments. Within the Church, these organisational structures occur at the parish, diocese, national and Vatican (international) levels. The Church as an institution has a hierarchical leadership structure consisting of the Pope, cardinals, bishops and priests. The hierarchical structure is similar to the hierarchy of the early Roman Empire, but this 'official church' is only one dimension of the whole Church. The institutional dimension of the Church is the way people developed to ensure that it is maintained properly and that its mission continues.

The Church formalises and teaches the truths of the religious tradition. The Catholic Church has a special name for the teaching authority of the church – the **magisterium**. The magisterium is the Catholic Church's authority to teach religious truth and the authority, by means of office, resides with the pope and the bishops as well as other people who contribute to the teaching mission, such as theologians and teachers.

magisterium
the official and authoritative teaching of the Catholic Church, as carried out by bishops or the Pope

Large institutions are complex organisations with many elements and sections contributing to the whole institution, and the same is true for the Church. Since its beginning, part of the mission of the Christian church has been to look after the poor and those on the margins of society; in the early church it was the task of the deacons to look after 'widows and orphans'. As the Church expanded, formal ministries were established within it. Some of these ministries include: education carried out in schools, colleges and universities; care of the sick carried out in hospitals and hospices; care of the widowed and orphaned carried out in aged care facilities, orphanages and social welfare agencies; care of those in prison through work in prison ministry; and care of the homeless and hungry through the works of charitable organisations such as the St Vincent de Paul Society. All of these ministries function under the overarching umbrella of the Catholic Church and their daily operations and dealings with people adhere to the beliefs of the Catholic Christian. While each of the institutional ministries has their own leadership structure, they also fit within the larger institutional structure of the Catholic Church.

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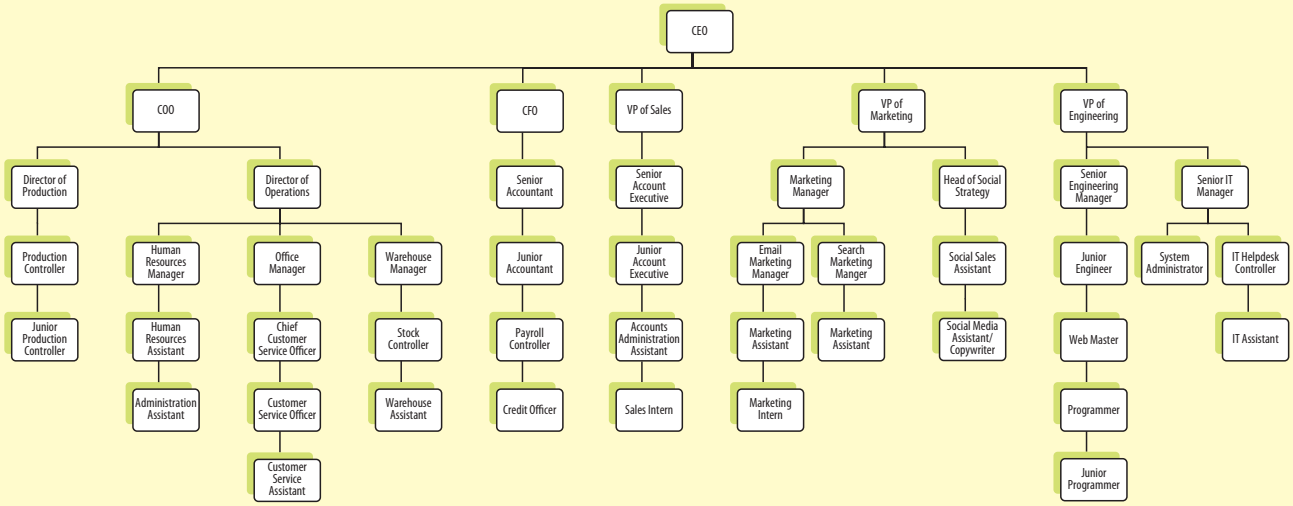
▲ **Figure 8.6** Part of the mission of the Church is to care for the poor.

ACTIVITY 8.4

The diagram depicts an extract from a large institution's organisational chart. Consider the text on the previous page and the image, and respond to the questions below.



1. What is the purpose of having a vertical organisational system (each group reporting to a 'line manager' or higher authority) such as the one in the image?
2. What would the result be if such a structure did not exist, and people within the organisation simply did as they chose?
3. How does this image compare with the description of the Church's structures as outlined in the text?
4. Name some other organisations that operate using a similar hierarchy. Why do you think this is so common within various sectors of society?
5. List some of the gospel values and messages that Jesus taught about how we should treat others.
6. In what way are some of the ministries listed in this section examples of these messages being carried out? Try to use a specific example to illustrate your response.

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Church as Sacrament

In the Catholic Christian tradition, there is a foundational belief that people are created in the image and likeness of God and that, therefore, all of life is sacred and a manifestation of God. Every moment of life is sacred and sacramental. Catholic Christianity teaches that the world is holy and that people are able to see the presence of God in the ordinary everyday things in the world – this is referred to as the sacramentality of life.

Sometimes we can be so busy or so concerned about ourselves that we forget to notice the sacramentality of life – the presence of God in the world – so we need some physical reminders of God's presence in our lives. The rituals of the Church's liturgical life are physical reminders of the sacramentality of life. In particular, the Seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage and Holy Orders) are not only physical reminders of God's presence in people's lives, but they also signify, celebrate and effect the presence of God in the world. The actions in the sacraments, such as pouring water and sharing bread, are actions from ordinary life, but when celebrated within the liturgical life of the Church and in community with other believers, they signify the presence of God in people's lives.

The Church is also a sign of God's presence in the world and, therefore, the Church functions as a sacrament. Originally, people did not think of the Church as a sacrament, but the Second Vatican Council reminded people that the Church '… is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all humankind' (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, no. 1). The Church functions particularly as a sacrament when it serves people.

▲ **Figure 8.7** Catholic Christianity is lived and expressed most especially in community.

One of the particular characteristics of Catholic Christianity is that Catholic life is communal. It does not simply mean that a person can only develop an individual relationship with God. In Catholicism, a person has a relationship with God, but that relationship is lived and expressed within the community of the faithful – the Church. Just as a sporting team is identified as a team because its members play together, the Christian community maintains its identity through its communal liturgical celebrations. When people gather together as a believing community, God acts in and through the people gathered: consequently, Catholic Christianity is lived and expressed most especially in community.

ACTIVITY 8.5

1. Think about what it means to be part of a team. Copy the table below, and record some of the expectations and responsibilities required of members of groups/teams. Some examples have been completed for you.
   In the final row, write down the expectations of individual members within the Church.

Sporting teams		Wear correct jersey/ playing gear			Positive on-field conduct
Part-time work	Be punctual		Meet deadlines		
Catholic Church					

2. What does membership of each of these groups have in common? Think about the difference between self-interest versus interests of the entire group.
3. If the individuals in each of these groups thought only about themselves, what might be the consequences for the group as a whole?

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Church as Herald of God's Word

In the ancient world, a herald was a messenger who announced important messages to the people in the local village or town. The Church has a message it wants people to hear – the message of the Good News of Jesus, so the Church is often described as a herald in proclaiming the Word of God to all people.

The spreading of the Good News began with the apostles and disciples and eventually the Good News spread to the 'ends of the earth'. Today, the Church heralds the Good News of Jesus in a number of ways: through the liturgy of the Word by proclaiming the scriptures, through its institutions such as Catholic schools, through the actions of missionaries, through church publications and media and, most particularly, through the actions of all Christians.

People hear the Word of God in the sacred texts of Christianity – the Old and New Testaments. These sacred texts proclaim and reflect people's beliefs, preserve their religious identity, provide meaning, hope, healing and motivation for people, as well as forge community and provide guidelines for behaviour. The proclamation of the Word in liturgy, when the community is gathered, is most clearly an example of the heralding of God's Word.

Ever since the beginning of the Church, people have travelled to far-off lands to spread the message of Jesus. In the New Testament, we read how Paul left his home to travel to 'foreign lands' to spread the teachings of Jesus. Paul and others like him are known as missionaries. Today, missionaries think of their work as not only bringing the Good News to foreign lands, but also discovering God in the people they serve. Rather than impose their own culture on people, missionaries try to live in solidarity with the local people, learning to appreciate how God is working through them.

Another way that all Christians are called to be heralds of God's word is to advocate on behalf of the poor and marginalised. Pope Francis said, when he visited a refugee camp in Greece in 2016: 'As people of faith we join our voices to speak out on your behalf'. When people advocate for the needs of others, they are heralds of the Good News.

The Church has also developed formal forms of communication and media as means of heralding the Word of God. A formal means of communication to the whole body of the Church is via a formal letter known as an encyclical. An encyclical is often a lengthy document that addresses a special need of the time. One of the most recent encyclicals is Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*, which is an appeal by the Pope to 'every person living on the planet' for an inclusive dialogue about how we are shaping the future of the planet. Encyclicals issued by previous popes have focused on world peace, working conditions of people and economic development. A more accessible means of communication to Catholic communities has been via Catholic newspapers and magazines. These weekly or monthly forms of communication address issues of concern on a local and national level and are a way for people to become informed on issues of concern to the local and world Church.

At the level of Vatican media and communication, the Vatican has a radio station, television outlet, website, and Twitter and Instagram accounts as well as a press office. At the Second Vatican Council, the Church realised that it needed to address contemporary forms of communication to spread the Word of God. This new understanding is expressed in the first two documents of Vatican II: *Sacrosantum Concillium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Liturgy) and the Decree, *Inter Mirifica* (the Church and Social Communication). While *Inter Mirifica* is only 24 paragraphs long, it nevertheless was a significant step forward regarding teaching about the use of forms of contemporary communication in order to herald the Good News. Its opening paragraph states:

> The Catholic Church, since it was founded by Christ our Lord to bear salvation to all humankind and thus is obliged to preach the Gospel, considers it one of its duties to announce the Good News of salvation also with the help of the media of social communication and to instruct people in their proper use … Church (should) have at its disposal and employ any of these media insofar as they are necessary or useful for the instruction of Christians … it is the duty of Pastors to instruct and guide the faithful so that they, with the help of these same media, may further the salvation and perfection of themselves and of the entire human family. In addition, the laity especially must strive to instil a human and Christian spirit into these media, so that they may fully measure up to the great expectations of humankind and to God's design. (*Inter Mirifica*, no. 3)

▲ **Figure 8.8** The Church has embraced contemporary forms of communication.

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ACTIVITY 8.6

1. In the statement on the previous page, a Church spokesperson speaks about the use of modern media forms, such as social media, saying 'Church (should) have at its disposal and employ any of these media insofar as they are necessary or useful for the instruction of Christians'. What do you think this statement is saying about the use of social media?
2. Think about your own Facebook, Instagram or other social media accounts. How might the use of these platforms be a positive factor for you?
3. What kinds of things need to be considered in order to use this type of media in a responsible way?
4. What are the possible ramifications if users fail to act responsibly on social media?

Every Catholic Christian is called to be a herald of the Good News through their actions and interactions with people. While some people may be called to leave their home to be missionaries, every person is called to herald the Good News by living good lives, working to the best of their ability, and speaking out and acting for the most marginalised in the community.

ACTIVITY 8.7

1. One of the main ways the Church works as herald is through scripture. The reading of scripture via the Liturgy of the Word is not the only way that this heralding can be done. Copy and complete the table by identifying the following ways in which the Church and other individuals/groups have used scripture as a means to herald.

Image	Use as a means to herald

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 8.7 continued

2 People do not only hear the Church's message via scripture. Various statements from the Church and individuals within the Church serve to herald Church teachings. The excerpts below are from encyclicals published by various popes in recent history. Copy and complete the table by reading each excerpt carefully, and summarising them in your own words in the last column. When you have done this, respond to the questions below.

Source	Excerpt	Summary
Encyclical Letter, *Redemptor Hominis*, Pope John Paul II (1979)	16. If therefore our time, the time of our generation, the time that is approaching the end of the second millennium of the Christian era, shows itself a time of great progress, it is also seen as a time of threat in many forms for man. The Church must speak of this threat to all people of good will and must always carry on a dialogue with them about it. Man's situation in the modern world seems indeed to be far removed from the objective demands of the moral order, from the requirements of justice, and even more of social love.	
Encyclical Letter, *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI (2009)	37. The Church's social doctrine has always maintained that *justice must be applied to every phase of economic activity*, because this is always concerned with man and his needs. Locating resources, financing, production, consumption and all the other phases in the economic cycle inevitably have moral implications. *Thus every economic decision has a moral consequence.*	
Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis, *On Care For Our Common Home* (2016)	48. The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet: 'Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest'.	

a Identify common threads that run through each of these statements. How are they similar?

b What are some key Church teachings that are being heralded for contemporary Catholics through these papal statements?

3 The Church continues to herald central teachings via a variety of media. In contemporary society, individuals within the Church at all levels are choosing to communicate via social and other forms of modern media. Go online and find the Twitter accounts of the Vatican News @newsva_en and Father Bob @Father_Bob.

Choose three tweets from both Pope Francis' Vatican account and Father Bob's local account. Record the central message of each tweet by copying and completing the table below.

Church leader	Twitter message	Central teaching/theme
Pope Francis		
Father Bob		

continued ➤

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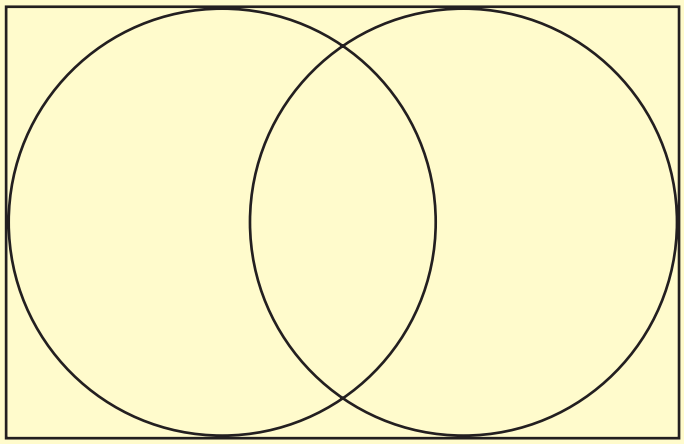
ACTIVITY 8.7 continued

4 Copy the Venn diagram below, then compare and contrast the content on the Twitter feeds of these two Church figures.



5 Many individuals choose to take up Church messages and become heralds by working with those who are less fortunate. Go online to search for and read about two such people, one from the 1840s (St Damien of Molokai) and one from today (Sister Melissa Dwyer).
   a Which key Church teaching/s resonated with these individuals? What kinds of messages did they choose to act on and live out?
   b Despite coming from very different eras, what central notion makes these two people similar?
   c What might have been the reaction of their family and friends when they decided to make such drastic decisions? Why do these reactions make the work described in the articles even more remarkable?

6 Watch the video of Sister Anne Gardiner's 2017 Senior Australian of the Year acceptance speech, via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7487. The content relating to Sister Anne begins at around minute 33.
   a What are some of Sister Anne's personal philosophies? How do these inform the work she does?
   b How does the work carried out by Sister Anne exemplify the idea of individuals as heralds?
   c The work of Sister Anne has been covered in a variety of Catholic and secular publications/programs. Study the article from *The Catholic Leader*, available at the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7488. What is the combined effect of both the individual's contribution as well as the coverage of it by a widely published paper? How might this combination serve to inspire other people?

7 Study some of the other articles featured on *The Catholic Leader* website. Evaluate this website in terms of its effectiveness in delivering Church messages. Refer to two specific examples from the site to support your answer.

Church as Servant

Throughout the gospels, Jesus reminds his followers that they need to care for the marginalised and behave as if they are servants to others. Likewise, the Church is called to be a servant in the world. The night before Jesus died, he called the disciples together, washed their feet and told them that, as servants of God, they should model this type of behaviour to others.

> [1]Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. [2]The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper [3]Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, [4]got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. [5]Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. [6]He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' [7]Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' [8]Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' [9]Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' [10]Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' [11]For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

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> [12]After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? [13]You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. [14]So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. [15]For I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you. [16]Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. [17]If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. (John 13:1–17)

In Matthew's gospel (25:35–46), Jesus reminds people that on the day of judgement they will be asked: When did you feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, take care of the sick and visit the imprisoned? These stories in the New Testament remind the Church and all its members that they are called to be servants in the world and how they should act in their lives.

The Church as Servant model emphasises that the Church is in the world and shares the concerns of the world, reflecting the opening statement of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* from Vatican II: '… The joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of people of the age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ'. The goal of the model is for the Church to be of help to all people, whoever they are, and to keep alive their hopes and aspirations for a better world. One of the strengths of the Church as Servant is that it stresses that the Church should be an agent of social change in the world.

The Church serves the world in many ways, but particularly through social services provided via the ministries such as helping the sick, working with refugees and visiting the imprisoned. Individuals contribute to the Church as Servant model when they share their abilities and expertise by volunteering in church groups that work for justice in the world.

▲ **Figure 8.9** The Church as Servant is the Church in the world.

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ACTIVITY 8.8

1. In the extract on the previous page from John's gospel, what do you think Jesus means when he says that he has '. . . set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you'?
2. How do Jesus' actions in the passage operate as a metaphor for serving those around you and considering the needs of others?
3. Investigate the Catholic Church organisations listed below by visiting their websites. Record the work carried out by these organisations and the various sectors within society to whom they offer help by copying and completing the table below.

Organisation	What does it do? Who does it help?
Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office	
Caritas – Australian Aid	
Caritas – Project Compassion	
St Vincent de Paul Society	
Rosies	

4. How does the work of each of the organisations investigated fulfil the notion that 'The Church as Servant model emphasises that the Church is in the world and shares the concerns of the world'?

Church as Community of Disciples

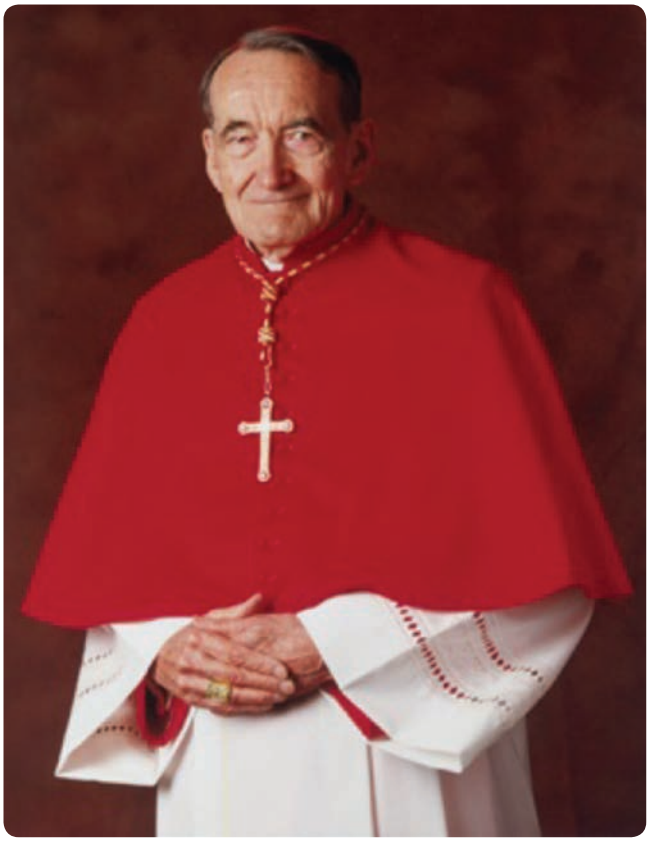
A disciple is a devoted follower of a teacher or leader, and disciples strive to live according to the beliefs and lifestyle of the person they follow. The Church as a community of disciples strives to follow the way of life set down by Jesus. This model – Church as Community of Disciples – is the unifying thread that draws all the models together. Besides proclaiming the Good News (herald model), the community of disciples, as individuals and as a group, should reproduce the deeds of Jesus (servant model), which includes fighting poverty and disease and bringing compassion and healing to the sick and those in need.

Grounded in scripture, the model is reflective of Mark 3:13–15:

> [13]Jesus went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. [14]And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, [15]and to have authority to cast out demons.

evangelisation the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus through word and witness

The discipleship model draws on this statement from the Second Vatican Council: 'the obligation of spreading the Word falls individually to every disciple of Christ'. It is a constant reminder that each person is called to **evangelise**, to service within the church and to imitate Jesus in their personal lives.



▲ **Figure 8.10** Cardinal Avery Dulles

Each of the six models of Church proposed by Avery Dulles are like the facet of a diamond presenting one dimension of the Church. The Church as a whole needs to

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be viewed from a variety of angles so that all elements are equally valued.

A few years after Dulles published his six models of Church, other theologians reviewed the models and added two additional ways of viewing the Church. The additional lenses are: Church as Basic Ecclesial Communities and Church as Contrast to Society.

Church as Basic Ecclesial Communities

Small ecclesial or church communities have existed since the beginning of the Church. Today, there are many examples of Catholic ecclesial communities across the world. The Community of Sant'Egidio (explored in Chapter 9) is but one example.

The Community of Sant' Egidio, which began in Rome in the late 1950s, gathers regularly for prayer, which is the source and motivation of its work with and for the poor. The community also works as a peace negotiator and facilitates high-level government conversations with nations at war in order to achieve a peaceful resolution to conflicts.

The defining feature of Basic Ecclesial Communities is that their members meet regularly, care for one another, reflect on the Word of God in their lives, pray and share Eucharist together. They choose their own leaders as well as maintaining links with local parishes and the wider church community.

ACTIVITY 8.9

Go online to find the homepage of the Emmanuel Community Brisbane. On the website, find evidence for how the community demonstrates the defining features of a Basic Ecclesial Community. Copy the table below, then record your evidence to complete it.

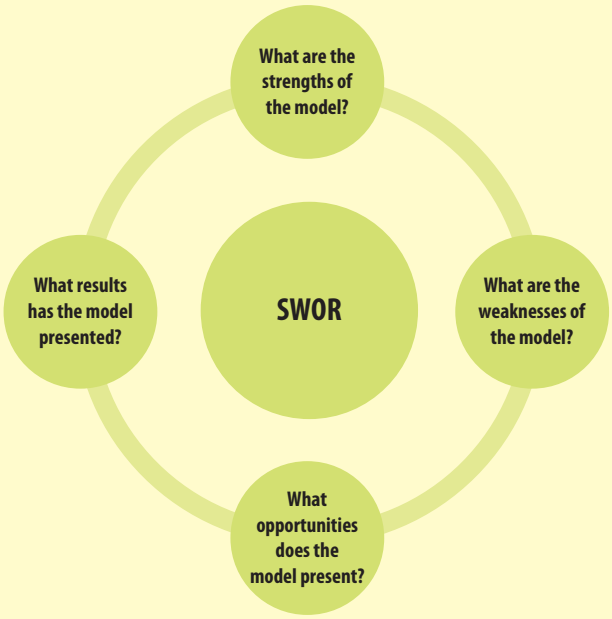
Defining feature	Evidence from website
Members meet together regularly	
Members care for one another and others	
Reflection of the Word of God	
Sharing of prayer and Eucharist together	
Connection with other parishes and wider Church community	

Church as Contrast to Society

Church as Contrast to Society is a view of church that shows it to be countercultural. It emphasises how the Church is a community with different values from those of the world, where we see significant differences between rich and poor, success and failure, and the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Church as Contrast to Society is a model that is primarily justice-focused and demonstrates solidarity with the poor.

ACTIVITY 8.10

1. Use the template provided to complete a SWOR (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, results) analysis for each model of church presented, and then formulate a hypothesis related to how the Church operates in the world today.


What are the strengths of the model?
What are the weaknesses of the model?
What opportunities does the model present?
What results has the model presented?
SWOR

2. Create a visual image for each model.

8.4 Conclusion

The Catholic Church, as the people of God, operates in a variety of ways throughout the world. Every member of the Catholic Church is called to spread the Word of God in their daily lives through prayer, justice and good moral living.

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CHAPTER 9

Church History

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Christianity is an historical religion: it is based on the life of an historical person – Jesus of Nazareth. Church history provides us with information and perspectives on how Christians lived out the gospels over the centuries. Knowing about Church history provides us with insights about how Christianity has developed and changed over time. In this chapter, we will explore the Catholic Church in the 20th and 21st centuries.

For most of the 20th century, the Catholic Church – along with the world – faced significant challenges: fascism, communism, irresponsible capitalism, the rise of nuclear weapons and extremes of poverty and wealth in various parts of the world. The Catholic Church tried to meet or ameliorate these challenges and, in doing so, gained greater insight into its own beliefs and values. Over time, the number of people adhering to the Catholic Church also grew.

9.1 Catholic Action Groups

From 1903 to 1914, the Catholic Church was led by Pope Pius X. Pope Pius X oversaw the codification of the Code of Canon Law which, for the first time, collected the laws of the Church into one volume. Early Communion for children and more frequent attendance at mass were among some of the aspects of Church life that he oversaw, as well as encouraging laypeople to be involved in Catholic Action groups and to work to improve the lives of the poor.

▲ **Figure 9.1** Many Catholic Action groups established in the 1900s continue to provide social services today.

The term 'Catholic Action' describes both a movement and a mentality. As a movement, Catholic Action began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when people proactively took action to counteract increasing levels of anti-clericalism present in Europe. The idea of Catholic Action began in Italy and rapidly spread throughout Europe, North America and Australia. At the beginning of the 20th century, Catholic Action became more organised and many groups of laypeople formed, in collaboration with Church hierarchy, to bring the teachings of the gospels into society. Catholic Action groups were major contributors to intellectual and religious engagement for laypeople from the early 1900s to the end of the Second Vatican Council. Many Catholic Action groups established the foundations of social service groups that operate within the Church today.

A variety of groups formed under the concept of Catholic Action. These included Young Christian Workers (YCW) in 1912, the Catholic Worker Movement in 1933 and the Community of Sant'Egidio in 1968.

Young Christian Workers Movement

In 1912, a curate, Father Joseph Cardijn, from a parish on the outskirts of Brussels, Belgium, founded the Needleworkers' Trade Union for young women working in the fashion industry. He also founded a group for young working boys. In 1924, the Young Trade Unionists, as they were called, changed their name to Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne – Young Christian Workers (YCW) movement – and Cardijn became their chaplain and adviser. In 1925, Pope Pius X formally approved YCW as a movement within the Catholic Church. YCW grew rapidly: in 1938 there were 500 000 members throughout Europe and by 1967 it had increased to 2 000 000 members in over 69 countries. Today, YCW continues as an

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international movement that values the dignity and worth of each person and encourages its members to challenge social exclusion and to take action to bring about change in the home, workplace and social life.

Joseph Cardijn developed a method of analysis to review social problems called 'See, Judge, Act'. The See, Judge, Act model begins with everyday lived experiences of people, their issues and problems, and challenges people to become aware of the reality of their situation and those around them. YCW groups meet on a regular basis, usually weekly or fortnightly, to explore the details of contemporary events and assess the causes and consequences of what has happened. In the 'See' movement, group members ask:

- What is happening?
- Who are the people involved?
- What is the situation doing to people? (Consequences)
- Why is it happening? (Causes)

In the 'Judge' movement, the group discusses the rights and wrongs of the situations, taking note of what has been discovered in the 'See' section. They ask:

- How do I feel about this situation?
- What do I think should be happening?
- What would the ideal be?
- What does my faith say about it?

In the 'Act' movement, the group discusses ways of responding to the situation described in the 'See' section and devises actions that can be taken individually and as a group. These actions are shaped by the responses to the following questions:

- What can we do to bridge the gap between what is happening and what should happen?
- Is there anything more we need to find out?
- What action will we take?
- Who can we involve in our action?

When the group meets again, it reviews the actions of the previous meeting to see what was successful. Some of the review questions include:

- Did we carry out the action?
- Did we achieve the original purpose? Did it change the situation of the people who originally brought the situation to our attention?
- What difficulties did we face?
- What effect did our action have on us and on others?
- What did we learn from the action?
- Is there anything we would do differently? Is there any further action to take?

The See, Judge, Act model is still used today when analysing social issues and planning action for social justice.

ACTIVITY 9.1

In 1943, a document prepared by Father Cardijn was translated into English for the Catholic Church in the United Kingdom. Extracts from the document, entitled *The Spirit of the Young Christian Workers*, are provided here.

Extract 1

The field of the lay apostle's work is prescribed by his/her place in the social order. Therefore the character of his/her apostolate must conform to his/her circumstances, for it is within and through the circumstances of his particular life that s/he will achieve results.

Catholic Action, no less than the Church, works upon all sorts and conditions of human life. Hence in order to have any real influence on the daily life of the masses it must be able to adapt itself to all their conditions.

Extract 2

The lay apostolate and Catholic Action have their fixed and necessary place in the Church. To deny or to underestimate this is to fail to grasp the significance of the Mystical Body and the Redemption. . . . But the lay apostle is encouraged by the knowledge that s/he has a task which s/he alone can fulfil. And as that is a task which lays due stress on the Christian dignity of the human person, and bears due witness to his/her status as a lay member of the Church, it will help them to be equal to their responsibilities. Once rouse in them these Christian ambitions and one may expect marvellous results.

To sum up, the lay apostolate has five characteristics:

1 It is an Apostolate proper to the laypeople as such.
2 It is a Lay Apostolate and differs from that of the Priesthood.
3 Though it is a Lay Apostolate, it is essentially the Complement of the Priestly Mission.
4 It is an Apostolate which is adaptable to all lay states.
5 It is an Apostolate on its own, which cannot be replaced by the Priestly Apostolate.

Extract 3

The Y.C.W. is a working model of Catholic Action because by means of its publications and congresses, and by its individual and corporate activity, it shows that it has at heart the re-Christianisation of the working classes, and that, too, is the aim of Catholic Action.

The Y.C.W. has all the other characteristics of Catholic Action, of its organisation, of formation, and of action. On those same lines it trains the workers to win the workers back to the Church. The fate not only of the working classes but of the whole human race is at stake. The great human family, split by class hatred and international strife, must come together once more under the leadership of Christ our Saviour. The rising generation must be taught to see material and temporal things in terms of the spiritual and eternal. For they, themselves renewed, must be the builders of a New World where reigns 'the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ.'

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 9.1 continued

Document study

Choose one of the extracts on the previous page. Based on your close reading of the chosen extract, respond to the following questions. For each response, you must provide evidence from the extract to support your thinking.

1. Who do you think is the intended audience of the document?
2. What exactly is the extract saying? (That is, write a two- to three-sentence summary of the extract in your own words – what is the key message)
3. What does the extract assume the reader already knows?
4. What purpose is the author attempting to achieve in writing this extract? (Link this to movements within the Church – what response is the author aiming for?)

Catholic Worker Movement

On 1 May 1933, in the United States in the midst of the Great Depression (1929–34), the *Catholic Worker* newspaper was first published in New York City. The newspaper was the main vehicle for spreading the ideas of the Catholic Worker Movement founded by Dorothy Day, a journalist and convert to Catholicism, with the support of Peter Maurin. The Catholic Worker Movement works to bring about the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy that are grounded in the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew's gospel. This requires people to respond to the material and physical needs of others by: feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, burying the dead and giving alms to the poor. The Spiritual Works of Mercy include acts of compassion that help people's emotional and spiritual needs and include: instruction, advice, consolation, comfort, forgiveness, and bearing wrongs patiently.

▲ **Figure 9.2** Feeding the hungry is enacting the Corporal Works of Mercy.

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One way the Catholic Worker Movement enacted the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy was to establish houses of hospitality, run by volunteers, in run-down areas of cities and rural communities where people who were in need of food, clothing and shelter could come for assistance. Day, herself, wrote: 'what we do is very little but it is like the little boy with a few loaves and fishes. Christ took that little and increased it. He will do the rest'. In addition to houses of hospitality, the movement worked in support of human rights, labour unions and the development of a non-violent culture. During times of conscription in the United States, the Catholic Worker Movement protested, and many volunteers were jailed for acts of protest against racism, unfair labour practices, social injustice and speaking out against war. Day was imprisoned for protesting in support of giving women the vote.

The fundamental tenets of the Catholic Worker Movement are hospitality, voluntary poverty, intentional community, prayer, personalism and pacifism. Personalism emphasises the dignity of every human person, especially the most marginalised by society. Personalism critiques communism, especially its treatment of workers as an undifferentiated social class, as well as critiquing rampant forms of capitalism that exploit workers. People who choose to join the Catholic Worker Movement, rather than just volunteer with the movement, live communally on donations and shun the material acquisition of goods. The movement is noted for its distinctive partnering of political radicalism with Catholic Christianity and it stands out against the 'accepted' views of contemporary society.

Dorothy Day led the Catholic Worker Movement from its inception in 1931 until her death in 1980. Originally considered a controversial figure, by the end of her life she was universally revered for her work within the Catholic Worker Movement and there is now a push to have her canonised as a saint. Today, throughout the United States, thousands of people are fed in soup kitchens run by the Catholic Worker Movement, and there are more than 134 established Catholic Worker communities across the country that provide services for people in all walks of life. Many offshoots from the Catholic Worker Movement have formed, including Pax Christi and the Catholic Peace Fellowship.

▲ **Figure 9.3** Dorothy Day

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ACTIVITY 9.2

1. The Catholic Worker Movement was led by Dorothy Day from its inception until her death. Access the link at http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7490 and watch the interview with Dorothy Day late in her life where she shares her beliefs about community and care of the poor.
   a. After watching the clip, what do you believe is Dorothy Day's central message about the care of people, especially the poor?
   b. Day talks about community and the communities of the Catholic Worker Movement. What does she believe are the most important aspects of these communities?
   c. At the end of the clip, Day talks about the financial responsibilities of society. What advice does she give regarding financial institutions?
   d. Day has a very clear message about community and care of individuals. How does this incorporate the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy?
2. Access the following link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7491 and watch the clip about a volunteer within the Catholic Worker Movement.
   a. During this clip, the young woman interviewed outlines how she sees the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy lived out in the work she does. Create a table where in one column you list the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy and in a second column an example from the clip.
   b. How does this young woman live out the vision of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement?
3. The Catholic Worker Movement has flourished and grown since the death of Dorothy Day. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7492 and watch the clip about the recent work of the organisation.
   a. Why was challenging organisations and how they treat individuals so important to the Catholic Worker Movement?
   b. Why would some people find the Catholic Worker Movement anarchical and confrontational?
   c. Why do you think the Catholic Worker Movement is flourishing today?

Community of Sant'Egidio

The Community of Sant'Egidio, a lay community within the Catholic Church, began in Rome in 1968 and today exists in over 73 countries with more than 60 000 members. The community was started by a young man, Andrea Riccari, when he gathered a group of high-school students together to listen to the Gospel and put the ideas of the Gospel into practice. The group began to visit and work with people living in the slums of Rome and very soon saw the need for a school for the children of the slums. They began an afternoon school called Scuola Pupolare – People's School – where members of the community volunteered to work with the children. Today, these schools are called Schools of Peace.

▲ **Figure 9.4** One of the ways the Sant'Egidio community helps disadvantaged people is by working with refugees.

There are five major foci of the Sant'Egidio community: prayer, communicating the Gospel, solidarity with the poor, **ecumenism** and dialogue. Members of the community gather regularly for prayer, where they listen to the Gospel and then discuss how the teachings may be brought to life in their daily lives. The second work of the community is spreading the Gospel message to people. This is done through their daily work as well as through volunteering in the activities of the community, especially working with the poor.

ecumenism from the Greek word *oikoumene*, meaning the inhabited world. Ecumenism is a movement that seeks to achieve unity of Christians.

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Since the very beginning of the community, the people of Sant'Egidio have worked with and for the poor by providing food, housing, aged care and education, as well as visiting people in prison and working with children in gypsy camps and refugee camps. One of the great works of the community is its work for peace and promoting dialogue. The community works across religious boundaries to assist people who are persecuted by war. Members of the community acted as facilitators and mediators in the Mozambique conflict, and they have also worked in other parts of Africa and in the Balkans. The Sant'Egidio community is a grassroots community that describes itself as a 'community without borders' in its work at an international and local level.

ACTIVITY 9.3

1. The Community of Sant'Egidio says it identifies with those who are considered the least in society, with no exceptions. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7493 and examine the community's website.
   Who does the community view as the 'least' in society?
2. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7494 and examine the clip about a recent conference of the community.
   a. What does this clip highlight about the work and beliefs of the Sant'Egidio community?
   b. Some organisations work to raise awareness of society's issues. How does the Sant'Egidio community both raise awareness and then support people in need?
3. After examining both clips, explain how this community lives out the Gospel message of supporting the least in society.

9.2 The First World War

The murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria on 28 June 1914 signalled the beginning of the First World War (1914–18). This was a different type of war from previous wars because it was the first that was fought simultaneously in the air, on land and on sea. Submarines were used for the first time, with deadly effect, destroying shipments of supplies and troops and squeezing the economies of the enemy. On land, new weapons such as mustard gas and machine guns increased the slaughter. It was called a 'world' war because Australia, Japan, the United States and Canada were drawn into a war that started in Europe. Also, it had huge implications for European colonies. For instance, if Germany conquered France, Germany would take control of France's colonies in Africa and Asia – so it was a war fought for global dominance.

Millions of Catholics on both sides were caught up in the war. Pope Benedict XV was elected pope on 3 September 1914 and ruled until his death in 1922. As a response to the war, Pope Benedict declared the neutrality of the **Holy See** and he used all his diplomatic skills to call for peace. Both sides rejected his initiatives. A pre-existing conflict between the Italian State and the Catholic Church, which had existed since 1870, remained unresolved. Tension existed between the Vatican and Russia and since the unification of Germany in 1870, Germany was predominantly Protestant, lessening the Holy See's influence in Europe. Germany's 'Kulturkampf' (bitter struggle), which refers to the power struggle between the nation state and the Roman Catholic Church over the role of religion in society, had bitter consequences for the Catholic Church: religious orders were banned, and the state not only withdrew subsidies from the Church, but also removed religious teachers from schools, imprisoned clergy and insisted that the training of priests be handed over to state authorities, so many seminaries closed. The Church was being marginalised by the government.

Holy See
also referred to as the See of Rome or Apostolic See; the seat of government of the universal church, located in the diocese of Rome

Benedict XV condemned the war as unjustified and gave away huge sums of Vatican money for relief work to provide help for the sick and injured and to provide homes for the thousands of refugees. Pope Benedict's first encyclical, *Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum* (Appealing for Peace), promulgated on 1 November 1914, called for an end to hostilities. On the following page are three extracts from *Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum*.

In 1917, after the Communists had taken power in Russia, Russia withdrew from the war to fight the revolution at home. On 11 November 1918, Germany surrendered and the war that was supposed to 'end all wars' was over. Six Eastern European countries were formed: Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia,

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ACTIVITY 9.4

Extract 1

. . . On every side the dread phantom of war holds sway: there is scarce room for another thought in the minds of men. The combatants are the greatest and wealthiest nations of the earth; what wonder, then, if, well provided with the most awful weapons modern military science has devised, they strive to destroy one another with refinements of horror. There is no limit to the measure of ruin and of slaughter; day by day the earth is drenched with newly-shed blood, and is covered with the bodies of the wounded and of the slain. Who would imagine as we see them thus filled with hatred of one another, that they are all of one common stock, all of the same nature, all members of the same human society? Who would recognize brothers, whose Father is in Heaven? Yet, while with numberless troops the furious battle is engaged, the sad cohorts of war, sorrow and distress swoop down upon every city and every home; day by day the mighty number of widows and orphans increases, and with the interruption of communications, trade is at a standstill; agriculture is abandoned; the arts are reduced to inactivity; the wealthy are in difficulties; the poor are reduced to abject misery; all are in distress. (*Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum*, no. 3)

Extract 2

Let the Princes and Rulers of peoples remember this truth, and let them consider whether it is a prudent and safe idea for governments or for states to separate themselves from the holy religion of Jesus Christ, from which their authority receives such strength and support. Let them consider again and again, whether it is a measure of political wisdom to seek to divorce the teaching of the Gospel and of the Church from the ruling of a country and from the public education of the young. Sad experience proves that human authority fails where religion is set aside. The fate of our first parent after the Fall is wont to come also upon nations. As in his case, no sooner had his will turned from God than his unchained passions rejected the sway of the will; so, too, when the rulers of nations despise divine authority, in their turn the people are wont to despise their human authority. There remains, of course, the expedient of using force to repress popular risings; but what is the result? Force can repress the body, but it cannot repress the souls of men. (*Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum*, no. 11)

Extract 3

As men are generally stimulated, Venerable Brethren, openly to profess their Catholic faith, and to harmonize their lives with its teaching, by brotherly exhortation and by the good example of their fellow men, we greatly rejoice as more and more Catholic associations are formed. Not only do we hope that they will increase, but it is our wish that under our patronage and encouragement they may ever flourish; and they certainly will flourish, if steadfastly and faithfully they abide by the directions which this Apostolic See has given or will give. Let all the members of societies which further the interests of God and His Church ever remember the words of Divine Wisdom: 'An obedient man shall speak of victory' (Prov. xxi. 8), for unless they obey God by showing deference to the Head of the Church, vainly will they look for divine assistance, vainly, too, will they labour. (*Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum*, no. 26)

Based on your reading of these excerpts, respond to the questions below. For each response, you must use full sentences and provide a direct quote that supports your assertions.

1. In Extract 1, what is the general mood evoked by Pope Benedict XV?
2. Also in Extract 1, what is meant by the phrase 'On every side the dread phantom of war holds sway'?
3. In Extract 2, what point is Pope Benedict making about religion and the state?
4. What is Pope Benedict's hope for the future, as expressed in Extract 3?

Bulgaria and Romania. While the map of Europe changed dramatically, the age-old hostilities did not end. The Germans had to sign a treaty that demanded they pay reparation to the Allied victors. The post-First World War conditions placed on Germany were one of the factors that fed developments in the Nazi Party, which came to power in Germany in the 1930s.

The war had terrible effects for many nations. Germany's economy was in ruins, its people were humiliated, starving and angry. For the Allies, it was not much better: France had drafted 23 000 French priests into its army and at the end of the war 4600 of them had been killed. Throughout Europe, churches, Catholic schools and other Church institutions were destroyed. Even more damaging was the split that took place between German Catholics, and Catholics from France, Belgium and Italy. After the war, nationalism rather than religious belief united people.

Australian Catholic Church

coadjutor
a bishop who is assigned to assist a diocesan bishop

The Australian Catholic Church involved itself in some political issues where the leadership felt political decisions were having a detrimental effect on Catholic people. Archbishop Daniel Mannix of Melbourne, an Irishman by birth, was appointed the **coadjutor** archbishop of Melbourne in 1913, before he became archbishop after the death of Archbishop Thomas Carr in 1917. Mannix did not oppose Britain's declaration of war in 1914, nor did he preach the heroics of war or involve himself in recruitment.

Initially, when war was declared, the number of men volunteering to enlist for the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was so high that people were turned away. However, as the war continued and casualty rates increased, the

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▲ **Figure 9.5** Statue of Archbishop Daniel Mannix outside St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne

number of volunteers declined. The Prime Minister, Billy Hughes, launched a conscription campaign to increase the number of Australian men in the armed forces who could be sent to the war. Archbishop Mannix, a skilled orator, was one of the most prominent voices against conscription. His opposition brought him and the Catholic Church into conflict with the Protestant majority. At this time in Australia, the majority of Catholics were of Irish descent and Mannix called on all Catholics to put 'Australia before the Empire', but many Protestants considered his stance anti-British and a reflection of his Irish heritage – a retaliation to the 1916 Easter Uprising in Dublin.

Twice during the First World War, Prime Minister Hughes held a national referendum to introduce conscription. Leading up to the first referendum, public meetings were held to debate the issue, one of which was at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne. Mannix was refused entry to the building and he organised an alternative meeting to take place at Richmond racecourse. Over 100 000 people attended. At the meeting, he denounced the people who refused him entry to the public meeting at the Exhibition Building and described them as having the 'backbone of boiled asparagus'. The first referendum was held on 28 October 1916 and was defeated: 49 per cent voted for the proposal while 51 per cent voted against.

Catholics were accused of not pulling their weight in the war effort, but Mannix used enlistment statistics to demonstrate how Catholics were signing up for the war in proportion to other members of the population. Mannix addressed many anti-conscription rallies where he said the working class would pay the highest price in the war and their sacrifice would be forgotten when the war ended. Mannix defended his position on conscription, saying that Australia's efforts were already enough and Australia needed to put the interests of its own country before those of the British Empire. Mannix went on to denounce the war altogether, labelling it a 'sordid trade war', and was quoted at the time as saying 'Conscription is a hateful thing, and it is almost certain to bring evil in its train … Australia has done her fair share – I am inclined to say more than her fair share – in this war'.

Hughes was re-elected in the 1917 elections, and he held a second conscription referendum on 20 December 1917, which was defeated by an even greater margin: 46 per cent for, 54 per cent against.

The issue of conscription revived a religious divide within Australian society. Because of its strong ties to England, the Anglican Church in Australia strongly

ACTIVITY 9.5

Document study

1. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7495 and read about the conscription debate. Listen to the various opinions in the sound bites and provide a brief summary of the arguments for and against conscription by copying and completing the table below.

For conscription	Against conscription

2. Refer to the text of speeches by Archbishop Mannix provided on the next page, labelled Source A and Source B.
   a. What is the general tone of the extracts of Mannix's speeches?
   b. To whom was Mannix addressing these speeches? How do you know?
   c. What argument was Mannix putting forward about conscription? To support your answer, provide three pieces of evidence from the texts (i.e. his reasons for his point of view).
   d. What does Mannix mean when he says, 'Others have money, but you have votes'?

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 9.5 continued

Source A

If you think Australia demands you should vote for conscription, do so. If you think it would not be good for Australia, then my advice is you should vote against it. That is what I hope every one of you will do to those who have unfortunately brought this question up again. But if you are going to keep Australia free from conscription, if you are going to keep this military slavery outside Australia, you must leave no stone unturned. Others have money, but you have votes. They will spend their money lavishly in order to carry this vote. If you are lethargic they will carry it against you. Every man, woman and child should throw themselves into the fight in the next few weeks against conscription.

Source B

But, for myself, it will take a good deal to convince me that conscription in Australia would not cause more evil than it would avert. (Applause.) I honestly believe that Australia has done her full share and more, and that she cannot reasonably be expected to bear the financial strain and the drain upon her manhood that conscription would involve. (Applause.) If conscription were adopted I should expect to find later on that many who are now its loudest advocates would be the first to rise up against the taxation necessary to redeem our obligations to the returned soldiers or to their widows or orphans or dependants in case the soldiers gave their lives on the battlefield … I think I can say that I have read most of the appeals that have been made for conscription in Australia. But in spite of these eloquent and impassioned appeals my common sense will not allow me to believe that the addition of 100 000 or 200 000 conscript Australians to the 15 000 000 of fighting men that the Allies have at their disposal could be a deciding factor or even a substantial factor in the issue of war.

supported conscription. Most Catholics, on the other hand, had views consistent with Mannix's, due largely to the vast Irish population of Catholics in Australia. Mannix became somewhat of a hero to the country's Irish Catholics. In England, however, he was condemned for his opinions on these issues and was not allowed to disembark in Ireland – which was then under British control – during a trip in 1920. He was also forbidden to visit Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow. He did, however, draw large crowds outside of these places, and in the United States he was viewed as a famous international figure.

Archbishop Mannix, like Pope Benedict XV, promoted lay Catholic Action. He founded the Catholic Central Library in 1923, fostered the Catholic Evidence Guild and, with encouragement from the Jesuits, established a Catholic Hour on radio 3AW. Other Catholic Action groups that flourished during this time included Young Christian Workers (YCW), National Catholic Girls' Movement, Young Christian Students (YCS) and the National Catholic Rural Movement. All of these organisations were approved by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and coordinated by the National Catholic Secretariat for Catholic Action established in 1937.

9.3 Communism

In the late 19th century, the major tenets of communism were articulated by Karl Marx. Marx called for a proletariat or workers' revolution that would destroy capitalism and private ownership of property. Once this was achieved, he thought that a workers' state would be established where all workers would be treated equally and control their own destinies. The Communist Party would rule and lead in the name of the people because, according to Marx, the people were ignorant of **Marxist** theory and method. Under communism, organised religion was suppressed as, according to Marxist ideology, the capitalist class used religion to keep people in bondage. Communists were also of the opinion that people only needed religion to give them hope because their current existence was intolerable and, therefore, under a new regime where all were equal, there would be no need for religion.

Marxism
an ideology used to form the basis of communism

The Rise of Communism

At the beginning of the 20th century, while communist parties existed in Britain and Germany, it was in Russia that communism came to power during the Russian Revolution of 1917. The Russian tsar was overthrown and a workers' state was established with the Communist Party, led by the Bolsheviks, in control. In 1918, the Bolsheviks assassinated the tsar and his family and many others who opposed them. One of the first moves of the Communist Party was to confiscate all church land and disperse priests, brothers and nuns. Most Russians belonged to the Russian Orthodox Christian tradition, but there were also significant numbers of Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews and some Muslims in the Soviet Union. While the official constitution allowed religious freedom, the Communist Party systematically suppressed the Christian churches; by 1939, only 500 of 50 000 churches remained open.

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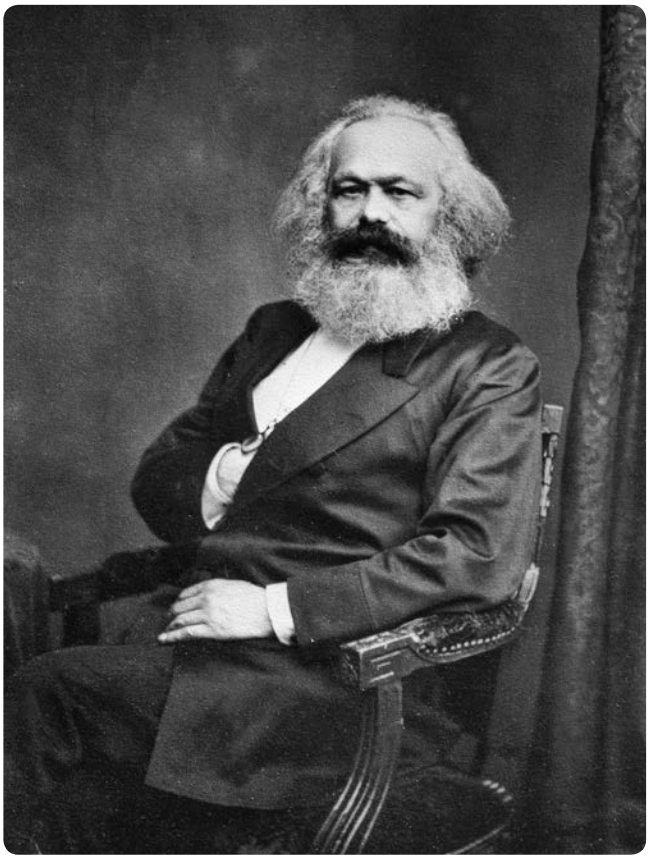

▲ **Figure 9.6** Karl Marx

In 1919, the Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin began the Communist International (known as the Comintern) to coordinate communist revolutions across the world, and in 1925 the party organised the League of the Godless to harass and persecute churchgoers. By 1929, priests were not considered workers and, therefore, were taxed at exorbitant rates, were given no healthcare provisions or social security, and were ineligible to join collective farms.

Joseph Stalin seized control of the Communist Party in 1927 and religious freedom became even more limited. Stalin's Five Year Plan (1928–33) was to wipe out all landowners, turn private farms into communal operations and industrialise society. In 1929, the Law on Religious Associations was proclaimed, under which people were allowed to worship in the few churches that remained and congregations had to register with the government. People were not allowed to be instructed in the faith nor could they gather for prayer or discussion.

In 1937, Pope Pius XI, in direct response to the increasing and severe persecution of Christians in Russia, published his encyclical *Divini Redemptoris*, which condemned communism and called for a worldwide day of prayer for the sufferings of the Christians in Russia. The encyclical decries communism as inherently atheistic and says that communism robs people of their dignity and liberty. The language used is very strong, as can be seen in these extracts:

> … In the face of such a threat, the Catholic Church could not and does not remain silent. This Apostolic See, above all, has not refrained from raising its voice, for it knows that its proper and social mission is to defend truth, justice and all those eternal values which Communism ignores or attacks. Ever since the days when groups of 'intellectuals' were formed in an arrogant attempt to free civilization from the bonds of morality and religion, Our Predecessors overtly and explicitly drew the attention of the world to the consequences of the dechristianization of human society. With reference to Communism, Our Venerable Predecessor, Pius IX, … as early as 1846 pronounced a solemn condemnation, … 'that infamous doctrine of so-called Communism which is absolutely contrary to the natural law itself, and if once adopted would utterly destroy the rights, property and possessions of all men, and even society itself … atheistic movements existing among the masses of the Machine Age had their origin in that school of philosophy which for centuries had sought to divorce science from the life of the Faith and of the Church'. (no. 4)

> … Communism, moreover, strips man of his liberty, robs human personality of all its dignity, and removes all the moral restraints that check the eruptions of blind impulse. There is no recognition of any right of the individual in his relations to the collectivity; no natural right is accorded to human personality, which is a mere cog-wheel in the Communist system. … (no. 10)

> … Where Communism has been able to assert its power – and here we are thinking with special affection of the people of Russia and Mexico – it has striven by every possible means, as its champions openly boast, to destroy Christian civilization and the Christian religion by banishing every remembrance of them from the hearts of men, especially of the young. Bishops and priests were exiled, condemned to forced labour, shot and done to death in inhuman fashion; laymen suspected of defending their religion were vexed, persecuted, dragged off to trial and thrown into prison. (no. 19)

> … But social justice cannot be said to have been satisfied as long as workingmen are denied a salary that will enable them to secure proper sustenance for themselves and for their families; as long as they are denied the opportunity of acquiring a modest fortune and forestalling the plague of universal pauperism; as long as they cannot make suitable provision through public or private insurance for old age, for periods of illness and unemployment. In a word, to repeat what has been said in Our Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno: 'Then only will the economic and social order be soundly established and attain its ends, when it offers, to all and to each, all those goods which the wealth and resources of nature, technical science and the corporate organization of social affairs can give. These goods should be sufficient to supply all necessities and reasonable comforts, and to uplift men to that higher standard of life which, provided it be used with prudence, is not only not a hindrance but is of singular help to virtue.' (no. 52)

> … After this appeal to the clergy, … to Our beloved sons among the laity who are doing battle in the ranks of Catholic Action. … Catholic Action is in effect a social apostolate also, inasmuch as its object is to spread the

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Kingdom of Jesus Christ not only among individuals, but also in families and in society. It must, therefore, make it a chief aim to train its members with special care and to prepare them to fight the battles of the Lord. This task of formation, now more urgent and indispensable than ever, which must always precede direct action in the field, will assuredly be served by study-circles, conferences, lecture-courses and the various other activities undertaken with a view to making known the Christian solution of the social problem. (no. 64)

ACTIVITY 9.6

1. In your own words, define communism.
2. This section details how communism suppressed religious freedom. Construct a timeline that details the rise of communism in Russia and the suppression of religious thought and practice.
3. In 1929 the Law on Religious Associations was passed in Russia, which forbade people's attendance or involvement with a religion. How do you think this would have affected devout Christians? Conduct some research to discover what happened to those who fought against this law.
4. Communism sought to destroy religion, but there is evidence that it continued in hiding within Russia. How does this reflect the experiences of the early Christian communities?
5. Pope Pius XI expressed strong viewpoints about communism. Look back through the section, then create two columns. In one column list what communism tried to do for society and, for each point, in your second column, find evidence from Pope Pius XI's response that refutes communist theory.
6. In the extract (no. 64), Pope Pius XI calls for Catholic Action to fight against the social problem. What would be an effective form of Catholic Action? How can a society guard against the rise of laws such as the Law on Religious Associations?

The Fall of Communism

By the late 1980s, people in the Baltic States were demanding more autonomy and the Kremlin was losing some control over certain regions in the Soviet Union. Estonia declared sovereignty in 1988, and similar movements rejecting communism began in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Romania. In Poland, a trade union called Solidarity (the first not to be controlled by the Communist Party) was set up at the Lenin Shipyard under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa in 1980. Within a year, its membership reached 9.5 million, one third of the working population of Poland. Solidarity was a non-violent,

▲ **Figure 9.7** Gdansk Royal Chapel in front of St Mary's Church, in Poland

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anti-Communist social movement that had considerable influence on the fall of communism. The Catholic Church played an enormous social and political role in the fall of communism in Poland. Poland, in the 1980s, was virtually a religious homogenous country, with over 90 per cent of the population identifying as Roman Catholic. The people of Poland saw the election in 1978 of Kraków's Cardinal Karol Józef Wojtyła as Pope John Paul II as one way of working towards the overthrow of communism in Poland.

At the beginning of the Communist regime, the Church in Poland was persecuted and oppressed. During the 1950s, many Catholic clergy were arrested, including the Polish Primate Cardinal. While still in prison, Cardinal Wyszynski instigated a protest in the form of the Great Novena (special prayer devotions of nine days) which, while not a political strategy, was a symbolic strategy that involved the nation. The Great Novena lasted from 1957 to 1966 and was a rhetorical weapon that the Church used against atheistic communism. As well as formal prayer, it involved a copy of the Black Madonna icon touring all parishes, and resting for a night in private homes selected by the local priests. This event had a substantial impact not only on social bonding, but also on the religious vitality of Poland, and from a political perspective it disseminated and embedded a network of symbols that formed the opposition for the future. The Great Novena and the touring icon were opposed by the state, and government authorities tried to disrupt celebrations at every turn. The disruptions backfired and ultimately led to reinforcing national opposition solidarities. In Gdansk, for example, the authorities refused to allow decoration in the streets for the procession. Instead, the people placed hundreds of candles along the perimeter of the Church boundaries, marking the limit they were allowed to decorate. In some ways, the Catholic Church in Poland managed to experience some freedoms that other Communist-ruled countries were not granted. The Church was able to supervise the training of priests, publish and distribute some Catholic materials to people, and the teaching of religious education in schools resumed, albeit with some restrictions. Church leaders were still opposed to communism and the government often restricted the building of new churches.

In the late 1970s, many Catholic parishes became sanctuaries for a variety of anti-Communist activity. Catholicism also gave inspiration to other opposition groups before the formation of Solidarity, such as the

▲ **Figure 9.8** Solidarity strikes in Poland

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Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN), which was formed in 1979 and based on Catholic ethics. The Church also contributed to the development of civil society by supporting cultural activities and expanding its role in education, so much so that by 1987 there were more than 22 000 Catholic places of religious teaching in Poland whose curriculum ranged from practical subjects to 'consciousness-raising'. The Catholic press and publishing houses encouraged pluralism and even published the poems of agnostic political dissidents who were jailed. The Catholic Church not only supported the rights of workers during the 1970s, but it also fostered Catholic intellectual clubs that enabled the development of an independent intellectual movement, as well as making public statements supporting the Workers' Defense Committee and supporting human rights work. In 1979, Pope John Paul II visited Poland for eight days and 13 million people (one third of the population) attended at least one of these public events.

When the strikes of the 1980s began, it was not uncommon for religious symbols and icons to be displayed at the demonstrations. Many priests began giving anti-Communist sermons and some even provided shelter for political dissidents. Throughout the 1980s, the Church protested and negotiated the release of political prisoners and by the end of 1986, 500 political prisoners had received amnesty. By the late 1980s, the Catholic Church in Poland was the centre of anti-Communist activism: the Church demanded that the government open dialogue with oppositional organisations, saying that if social and economic problems were to be solved, all views had to be considered. During the national strikes of 1988, the Church arbitrated between labour unions and the government and the Polish Episcopate took part in talks between Solidarity representatives and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In 1989, a new law on church–state relations was passed that allowed the Church to resume its role as intermediary between state and society. In June of the same year, elections were held and a new, non-Communist government came into power. In December, amendments were made to the Polish constitution that removed all Marxist references and changed the name of the country back to the Polish Republic. In 1991, the first free Polish parliamentary election since the 1920s took place and Poland transitioned from a Communist-led country to a liberal democratic political system.

▲ **Figure 9.9** Pope John Paul II (Karol Józef Wojtyła)

ACTIVITY 9.7

1. Pope John Paul II was born in Poland and became a priest during the rise of communism in Poland. In the early years of his time as pope, Poland experienced martial law and suppression in response to the rise of workers protesting against corruption and communism. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7496 and watch the clip.
   a. What difficulties would Pope John Paul II have experienced in speaking out against communism, but at the same time supporting the Polish Catholic community?
   b. How do you think the Communist Party at the time would have reacted to the pope's comments about communism, and his support of Polish Catholics?
2. The clip in the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7497 looks at some of the critical moments in the rise of Solidarity in Poland.
   a. The clip highlights a visit to Poland by Pope John Paul II. It is estimated that 13 million people attended the pope's address. How do you think this event may have contributed to increased popularity and support for Solidarity?
   b. Do you think that people would have attended the pope's address and Mass just to see a significant person, or do you think there may have been deeper reasons? Explain your response with examples from the clips and information in this section of the text.

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9.4 Fascism

Fascism, a radical form of authoritarian nationalism that stresses class or racial dominance, glorifies one class over another and emphasises national unity based on racial purity, came into being during the 1920s. Modern fascism was born in Italy under the dictator Benito Mussolini, who called for Italy to recover its heritage and become an empire again.

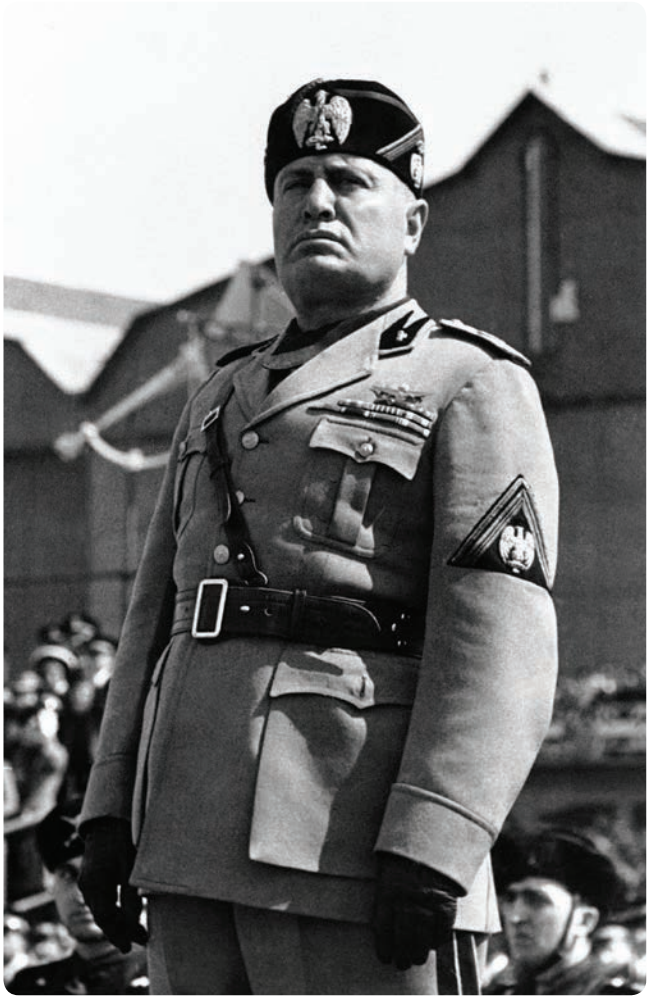
fascism
a radical form of authoritarian nationalism that stresses class or racial dominance

Italian Fascism

When Mussolini and the Fascist Party took control of the Italian Government in 1919, he promised to invigorate the economy and oppose communism. The Fascists soon began to control all aspects of Italian life. Mussolini also began to rearm the military. Anyone who opposed the regime was jailed and some were killed. Mussolini's actions were very brutal and the Vatican spoke out against the oppression. In an effort to quash condemnation of his rule, Mussolini began talks with the Vatican with the goal of reaching a new accord between Italy and the Vatican – since 1870, when Victor Emmanuel II was declared king of Italy and the Church lost the Papal States, the popes had not set foot on Italian soil: Pope Pius IX even called himself a 'prisoner of the Vatican'. For 60 years a hostile relationship existed between the papacy and Italy, and this was sometimes referred to as the 'Roman Question'. Mussolini and the Church clashed over many issues, but a significant one was who should control education. Mussolini wanted control to ensure that children grew up as fascists; however, the Church believed it should have control of education in the predominantly Catholic nation.

Eventually, in 1929, the Lateran Treaty was signed by Mussolini and the Cardinal, Secretary of State for the Vatican. By signing the treaty, the papacy gave up territorial claims in Italy and recognised the government and the king. The government insisted that it approve the nominations of bishops and the pope was to remain neutral regarding Italian politics. In return, the government reaffirmed that Roman Catholicism would remain the single religion of the Italian nation. This meant that religion was taught in primary and secondary schools, and the Church had control over marriage. It recognised the existence of Vatican City as an independent nation and agreed to compensate the Church for the loss of Rome and the Papal States.

In 1931, Mussolini tried to suppress the activities of Catholic Action groups, but Pope Pius XI publicly opposed



▲ **Figure 9.10** Benito Mussolini wearing the Fascist uniform

this and, in 1931, published his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (On Reconstruction of the Social Order), which criticised absolutist states that controlled all aspects of life. Pius XI began the encyclical by referring to Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, and then updated four issues that Leo had raised: Church authority, private property, just wages and worker associations. Pius XI insisted that the Church had a responsibility to address social issues. He steered a careful path between the excesses of unregulated capitalism and the command economy of communism, emphasising how ownership has both an individual and a social nature. Individuals must have the means to acquire wealth and provide for their families without undue interference from the state, but the distribution of wealth must ensure the common good and prevent extreme disparities of wealth. The encyclical also introduced the concept of subsidiarity.

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> . . . That the State is not permitted to discharge its duty arbitrarily is, however, clear. The natural right itself both of owning goods privately and of passing them on by inheritance ought always to remain intact and inviolate, since this indeed is a right that the State cannot take away: 'For man is older than the State'. (no. 49)

> To each, therefore, must be given his own share of goods, and the distribution of created goods, which, as every discerning person knows, is labouring today under the gravest evils due to the huge disparity between the few exceedingly rich and the unnumbered propertyless, must be effectively called back to and brought into conformity with the norms of the common good, that is, social justice. (no. 58)

> . . . The supreme authority of the State ought, therefore, to let subordinate groups handle matters and concerns of lesser importance, which would otherwise dissipate its efforts greatly. Thereby the State will more freely, powerfully, and effectively do all those things that belong to it alone because it alone can do them: directing, watching, urging, restraining, as occasion requires and necessity demands. Therefore, those in power should be sure that the more perfectly a graduated order is kept among the various associations, in observance of the principle of 'subsidiary function,' the stronger social authority and effectiveness will be the happier and more prosperous the condition of the State. (no. 80)

The Italian population were swayed by Mussolini's views and Italy continued on the path of fascism, eventually aligning with the German leader, Adolf Hitler.

Spanish Fascism

Prior to the Fascist Party taking control in Spain in 1939, Spain was a largely Catholic country run by communists. During the 1920s, the government actively persecuted the Church: Church property was nationalised, education was secularised and religious orders were suppressed and disbanded. In some areas, churches were burned and priests and religious leaders were killed. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, growing resistance to communism was led by Fascist military men.

In 1936, civil war broke out and the Church supported General Francisco Franco's Fascists against the communists, even though the Fascists were supported by Mussolini and Hitler. In one year alone, in 1936, 10 bishops, 6000 priests and 16 000 religious and lay leaders were murdered by the communists. The civil war lasted until 1939, when Franco imposed military rule on Spain. Eventually, order returned to Spain and Catholicism was given official recognition and the protection of the Nationalist government.

In 1941, an agreement was reached between the Vatican and the Franco government and a formalised Concordant

▲ **Figure 9.11** Pope Pius XI

was signed in August 1953. The agreement included: recognition of Catholicism as the official religion of Spain; mandatory Catholic religious instruction at all education levels; and financial support of the Church by the state, including paying the salary of priests and contributing to the reconstruction of churches. It also guaranteed representation in both press and radio. To ensure the support of the Church, Franco insisted that he be granted the right to participate in the selection of bishops. The Concordant remained in effect until December 1979, when a new democratic constitution was developed.

German Fascism

German fascism meant that German people considered themselves superior to all other races and nations, and oppressive measures were used to discredit religious groups if they spoke out against the Fascist regime. The German Fascists, led by Hitler, struggled with the communists for authority in Germany. Many Germans feared communism because of its links with their age-old enemy, Russia. The National Socialist Movement, Nazism, stressed absolute unity under the Führer (leader) and the Nazis promised a 'super community' of Aryans.

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The German Catholic Church reacted in a variety of ways to Hitler and the 12 years of Nazi rule. Catholic bishops warned people about Nazi racism, particularly anti-Semitism, and in some dioceses Catholics were forbidden to join the National Socialist party because of its racist attitude. Very few Catholics voted for Hitler during the elections between 1930 and 1933. In 1933, when Hitler came to power as chancellor of Germany, the Catholic Church stopped officially opposing the Nazi party and Catholics were told they should cooperate with the government.

Pope Pius XI wrote a letter in 1937 to the Church in Germany. In *Mit Brennender Sorge* he referred to the Nazis as brainwashing the people. The letter was smuggled into Germany and read at every Sunday Mass in every parish in Germany. Hitler was enraged by the letter and closed all the printing houses associated with the letter as well as throwing priests and laypeople into prison on false charges in an attempt to threaten the pope so that he would not criticise German fascism any further. The Nazis worked to systematically destroy all Church organisations and tried to close the Catholic press. By the time Pope Pius XI died in 1939, the Nazis had control of Germany.

9.5 The Second World War

By the end of the 1930s, Catholic Church officials were aware that one of Hitler's aims was to destroy Catholicism, and Christianity in general. When the war officially broke out after Germany's invasion of Poland, Hitler, not wanting to distract Christians from the war effort, limited his anti-Catholic activities and policy. The Catholic bishops did not wish to appear unpatriotic and supported the war effort, even though it was against Catholic Poland.

Pope Pius XII was elected in March 1939. Prior to his election as pope, he was the papal nuncio to Germany and he lobbied world leaders to avoid war. While the Vatican was officially neutral during the war, Pius XII tried to use his diplomatic skill to help victims of war. However, some people criticised his leadership, saying he should have made more public statements against Nazism and taken more action to assist the Jews and other victims of the war. Pope Pius XII was a cautious diplomat and for most of the war he tried to protect the interests of the Church. Nevertheless, in his 1942 Christmas radio broadcast he said: 'Humanity owes this desire (for a return to peace) to the hundreds of thousands of people who, for no fault on their part, but simply because of their nationality or ethnic origin have been condemned to death or progressive extinction'.

Several bishops spoke out against Hitler's persecution of the Jews. Konrad Preysing, the Bishop of Berlin, preached a sermon in 1942 that attacked the state; and Bishop Frings wrote a pastoral letter cautioning the faithful to respect the rights of others, and later preached at Cologne Cathedral, saying that 'no one may take the property or life of an innocent person just because he was a member of a foreign race'. Many members of the Church – priests, religious and laypeople – risked their lives to rescue and hide Jews. This is one extract from the records of Righteous Gentiles held at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, which details how a Catholic priest helped save the lives of a Jewish family:

> This is the story of the rescue of four children of one family whose parents were deported to Auschwitz. . . . Father Louis Celis served as a priest in Gotem (Belgium). His brother, Hubert, was priest of the nearby community of Halmaal. In September 1942, Monsignor Louis-Joseph Kerkhofs, Bishop of Liege, invited some of the clerics in his diocese and encouraged them to rescue Jews. . . . Monseignor Kerkhofs also put the priests in contact with a lawyer and Resistance member Albert Van den Berg who undertook to keep the priests informed about every new German decree regarding Jews.
>
> When Father Hubert returned home, Tena Rotenberg, accompanied by one of his parishioners, came knocking on his door. With tears in her eyes Tena Rotenberg told him that her family had left Brussels because of the danger to the Jews, but that she was about to be arrested. She pleaded with him to take care of her four children. Father Hubert acted immediately. He placed the two girls, sixteen-year-old Regine and two-year-old Sonia with his eighty-year-old father, Joseph, who lived with his daughters Bona and Lucy in Saint Trond; the two boys, thirteen-year-old Wolfgang and nine-year-old Sigmund, were put in the care of his brother, Father Louis and his housekeeper Marie-Louise Tabruyn.
>
> In order to avoid suspicion as to their origin, the Rotenberg boys had to attend church services regularly, but in the privacy of his home, Father Louis Celis made sure that the boys would preserve their Jewish identity. He encouraged Wolfgang to put on his phylacteries (Tefillin) and recite his prayers, and went as far as to inform himself about the Jewish rituals so that he could make sure that the boys kept the tradition. His housekeeper Marie-Louise Tabruyn, helped the priest to take care of the boys.
>
> Father Hubert Celis kept in touch with the children's parents, Moszek and Tena Rotenberg and frequently went to see them. However, one month after they had handed their children to Father Hubert, they were denounced by an informer, arrested and deported. The Celis family now had full responsibility for the children's fate. Apart from taking care of the Rotenberg children, it is known that Father Hubert hid four or five Jews in his home for shorter periods of time.

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On the day the parents of the Rotenberg children were captured, Hubert Celis was arrested for the first time. The officer who interrogated him threatened to shoot him if he didn't reveal the children's whereabouts, but being a Catholic himself, the policeman didn't dare go as far as harming a priest, and Celis was released.

With their names figuring on the Germans' wanted list, their situation became very dangerous. Louis decided that in order to ensure their safety, it was better to place the boys with another family. He himself went into hiding, but his housekeeper remained in contact with the two brothers to guarantee their well-being … Towards the end of the occupation, the boys returned to Father Celis and Marie-Louise Tabruyn. He also arranged for Regina to be temporarily placed with friends, and found a permanent shelter for Sonia with Alfons and Clementina Maris who had a farm in Zonhoven (Limburg). A few weeks later, after the situation had quieted down and the danger to his family seemed to be over, Regina returned to the home of Joseph Celis and his daughters …

On May 3, 1944, Regina Rotenberg was denounced and arrested in the home of Joseph Celis. It was the same policeman who had arrested her parents eighteen months earlier, who came for her. She was deported to Auschwitz, where her parents Moszek and Tena had perished. She survived the camp and returned after the war. The same day Regina was taken, Father Hubert was arrested for the second time, but again managed to talk himself out of trouble.

On March 25, 1980, Yad Vashem awarded the title of Righteous Among the Nations to the members of the Celis family and to the others who were involved in the rescue of the four Rotenberg children.

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As well as individuals, some Catholic communities worked together to save Jews, as can be seen by the actions of the Assisi Network.

Assisi is the home of St Francis of Assisi. No Jewish community was ever known to exist in Assisi. Paradoxically, however, the only time in history when there is record of Jews living in Assisi is during the Holocaust, when the town and its churches, monasteries and convents became a safe haven for several hundred Jews.

Shortly after the German occupation, when the man-hunt for Jews began, the Bishop of Assisi, Monsignor Giuseppe Placido Nicolini, ordered Father Aldo Brunacci to head the rescue operation for Jews and to arrange shelter in 26 monasteries and convents. The Bishop went as far as to authorize the hiding of Jews in such places that were regularly closed to outsiders by the monastic rule which restricted the 'cloister' within the monastery to monks/nuns only. A Committee of Assistance was also established and many Jews passing through the town were provided with false papers enabling them to survive in other places.

Father Aldo Brunacci, the canon of the Cathedral of San Rufino, served as the head of the Assisi network. Father Rufino Niccacci, the Father Guardian of the St Damiano Monastery, also played an important role in the network by arranging false papers and locating hiding places in the monasteries and convents, where he disguised the Jews as monks and nuns.

The network not only secured the Jews' lives, but also made great efforts to supply Jews with some of their religious needs. After the war, Brunacci described how Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement and the highest holiday in the Jewish calendar – was celebrated in Assisi in 1943, and how in one of the convents the nuns prepared the meal for the end of the fast.

Looking back on that period after the war, Fr Brunacci remarked:

'In all about 200 Jews had been entrusted to us by Divine Providence with God's help and through the intercession of St Francis. Not one of them fell into the hands of their persecutors … Jews and Christians venerate the same book, the Bible, whose opening chapter reminds us that we were created in God's image and likeness. God is our father and we are all brothers and sisters.'

Father Rufino Niccacci was recognised as Righteous Among the Nations in 1976. Monsignor Giuseppe Placido Nicolinie and Father Aldo Brunacci were recognised as Righteous Among the Nations in 1977.

▲ **Figure 9.12** Assisi Cathedral – the Bishop of Assisi started the Assisi Network, where churches, monasteries and convents of Assisi became safe havens for Jews during the German occupation.

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9.6 The Second Vatican Council

▲ **Figure 9.13** Pope John XXIII (Angelo Roncalli)

Pope John XXIII (Angelo Roncalli) was elected pope in 1958. Very few people expected that he would be elected and many thought his reign would be uneventful – nothing could have prepared people for what was to occur during his pontificate. Pope John XXIII had a very different style from previous popes: he left the Vatican and visited the sick in hospital and provided pastoral care to people in prison. But one of the greatest surprises of his time as pope was his calling for an ecumenical council on 25 January 1959. In previous eras when councils were called, it was in response to a crisis or to address heresies, but this was not the case with the Second Vatican Council. The Council, which is considered a time of spiritual renewal for the Church, had two main purposes: to promote the unity of all Christians and to identify how the Church could adapt itself to a rapidly changing world. In his opening address to the Council, Pope John XXIII outlined four aims:

- the development of the idea of how the Church would operate in the modern world
- Church renewal
- the unity of all Christians
- dialogue between the Church and the world.

He referred to the Council as a 'new Pentecost' and encouraged people to 'look to the future without fear'. Pope John XXIII also used the Italian word *aggiornamento* to refer to the Council, which means 'updating' or 'modernising'.

In preparation for the Council, Pope John XXIII sought ideas from a wide variety of sources, including every bishop in the world, heads of clerical religious orders, Catholic universities and theology faculties and members of the Roman Curia. Over 9300 proposals were submitted from all parts of the world.

The Council met four times between 1962 and 1965:

- first session October to December 1962
- second session September to December 1963
- third session September to November 1964
- fourth session September to December 1965.

In between each of the sessions, working groups drafted, redrafted and refined papers to be submitted for the next session of the Council.

In the first session, 2400 bishops were present – this was the first worldwide council as previous councils had been mainly attended by Europeans because of the difficulty in negotiating travel from various parts of the world. The Second Vatican Council also included observers from the Orthodox traditions, Anglicans and Protestants. In June 1963, Pope John XXIII died of cancer and so the Council was interrupted while the election of a new pope occurred. On 21 June 1963, Giovanni Montini was elected pope and he chose the name Paul. Pope Paul VI continued the work of the Council, and the Council closed on 8 December 1965.

At the Council, the bishops debated, amended, voted on and eventually approved 16 documents covering a wide range of topics that were published for all members of the Church. The four most important and largest documents are called Constitutions because they address doctrinal and pastoral matters that pertain to the essence of the 'constitution' of the Church. They are the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*), the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Die Verbum*), the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*). Shorter documents dealing with other issues were called Decrees or Declarations. Decrees are texts that apply the principles outlined in the Constitutions and include: Ecumenism; Eastern Catholic Churches; the Instrument of Social Communication; Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church; Priestly Formation; Renewal of Religious Life; Apostolate of the Laity; Ministry and Life of Priests; and Church's Missionary Activity. The Declarations provide principles and guidelines on specific topics and include: Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*); Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*); and Christian Education (*Gravissum Educationis*).

A particular insight that emerged from the Council was that the mission of the Church belongs to all baptised people – clergy and laity alike. While this had been known before, it was now given particular emphasis. Everyone has a duty to strive for holiness and to spread the Gospel in word

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and deed. Since the Second Vatican Council, laypeople have assumed a more active role within the Church, fulfilling roles such as lectors, Eucharistic ministers, parish workers, teachers, social workers and counsellors.

Liturgy

At the time of the Second Vatican Council, the formal liturgy of the Church, the Mass, had remained unchanged since the Council of Trent in the late 1500s. The Mass was celebrated in Latin, the priest faced the tabernacle not the people, and people participated by following the prayers using a missal. The focus of the Mass was on worshipping Jesus as God present in the Eucharist. The Constitution on Sacred Liturgy changed the liturgy of the Mass. Today, Mass is celebrated in the vernacular (the language of the people – in Australia it is in English, in the Netherlands it is in Dutch); the priest faces the congregation and communicates directly with the people; the first and second readings from the Old and New Testaments are proclaimed by laypeople; the congregation participates through spoken responses and singing; and Communion is often received in both forms of bread and wine. The primary focus of the liturgy is to celebrate Jesus present among the community of believers and to support the faith and life of the community.

Church

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church articulated a contemporary self-understanding of the Church and stressed that the Church is the people of God. In Chapter 4,

▲ **Figure 9.14** After the Second Vatican Council, Mass was celebrated in the vernacular with the priest facing the congregation.

▲ **Figure 9.15** The laity share in the mission of the Church.

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devoted to a theology of the laity, is the idea that people, through their baptism and confirmation, share in the mission of the Church. One of the significant outcomes of the Council and a direct consequence of this document was the multiplicity of lay ministries that were developed in the post-conciliar Church and the involvement of lay men and women in the Church's task of theological reflection. The final sections of the document describe the Church as a 'pilgrim Church', emphasising that the Church is on a journey which is not set in time or unable to change.

Revelation

The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation explains how God communicates with people through history and especially through the person of Jesus and the whole of life. The final chapters emphasise the importance of scripture and its central place in the life of the Church, particularly in liturgy. The document calls for new translations of the scripture from original texts, so that the most accurate translations are available for people, and encourages people to use the tools of biblical scholarship when studying scripture.

Church in the Modern World

One of the most significant shifts outlined by the Council was to focus on how the Church is in the world rather than separate from the world. The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, the longest of the Council documents, says: 'The joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of people of the age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ'. This document inspired a range of socially conscious religious movements across the world, some of which include: liberation theology in Latin America; Indigenous theologies in Africa, Australia and Asia; and new Catholic Action Movements related to peace, economic justice and the role of women in the Church.

The Second Vatican Council began a time of great renewal and sweeping change in the Church's liturgy, theology, its understanding of authority and ministry, its religious communities and parish life. The Council not only began a renewal of Catholic life, it also changed the way Catholics understood themselves and their Church.

ACTIVITY 9.8

1. Examine the following sources by accessing the links in the table, and then answer the questions that follow.

Source	Stimulus material
Source 1	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7498
Source 2	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7499
Source 3	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7500 http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7501
Source 4	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7502 http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7503
Source 5	http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7504 http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7505

   a. Source 1 depicts an empty church. Complete a PMI (plus, minus, interesting) chart of the impact of Vatican II on the world's Catholics. What conclusions can you draw from this?
   b. To what extent do you agree with the cartoon? Justify your response.
2. Referring to Source 4, explain your understanding of liberation theology.
   a. Provide reasons as to why some people were fearful of liberation theology. Do you believe their reasons are justified?
   b. What hope does liberation theology offer that a traditional approach may not? Provide reasons for your response.
   c. Create a hypothesis in response to the question: Liberation theology was born in poverty and disadvantage and speaks to those who are disenfranchised and defenceless. To what extent is liberation theology's reach restrictive and limited?
3. 'The Gifts and calling of God are irrevocable' is from the Letter to the Romans (11:29) and is the title of a 2015 document discussing Jewish–Christian relations. Refer to Source 3 to respond to the following:
   a. What do you identify as most significant about the relationship between *Nostra Aetate* and Jewish–Christian relations?
   b. Outline your understanding of the relationship between Jews and Catholics as referred to in the documents in Source 3. Do you believe this is important? Explain your reasoning.
   c. Many voices are calling for a third Vatican Council to foster greater interfaith relations. To what extent are the documents produced over 50 years ago still relevant to today's issues? Provide evidence to justify your response.
4. The role of women in the Catholic Church is a contentious one. Consider all sides of the debate to ordain women and list the advantages and disadvantages of all perspectives. Create a proposal for the Church and its relationship with women as it approaches the 2030s. Use Source 5 to help answer these questions.
5. Pope John XXIII's hope was to 'cultivate a flourishing garden of life' when he advanced the Second Vatican Council.
   a. Drawing on other stimulus provided, present your assessment of the success of the Council.
   b. Write a new analogy that depicts the role of the Church in the lives of Catholics in the 21st century. Consider the symbolism you will use to support this.

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9.7 Ecumenism and Inter-religious Dialogue

▲ **Figure 9.16** Since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has sought to achieve unity between all Christians. This movement is ecumenism.

The Catholic Church of the late 20th and early 21st century stands on the shoulders of the changes prompted by the Second Vatican Council. Some of these changes include the Church's relationship with other religions and ecumenism.

Ecumenism

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has been committed to the modern ecumenical movement. Ecumenism is a movement within Christianity that seeks to achieve the unity of all Christians. The Decree on Ecumenism from the Second Vatican Council encourages all Catholics to participate in the work on Christian unity. This work involves conversation, dialogue and service with others. When people dialogue and work with each other, they begin to understand the beliefs of others and sometimes in these conversations people learn a great deal about themselves and their own beliefs.

Each year, in late January, a week is set aside when Catholics are invited to pray for Christian unity. In many parishes across Australia and the world, people of different Christian denominations come together to pray and work for justice. The prayers offered are not about converting others to one tradition, but rather they join together in prayer as an expression of faith that unites all people in Christ.

Inter-religious Dialogue

During the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI set up a special department at the Vatican called the Secretariat for Non-Christians, and in 1988 it was renamed the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. The purpose of the office was to promote inter-religious dialogue according to the Declaration *Nostra Aetate* and its responsibilities include: promoting mutual understanding, respect and collaboration between Catholics and the followers of other religious traditions; encouraging the study of religions; and promoting the formation of people dedicated to inter-religious dialogue.

In most dioceses throughout the world, there are groups of Catholic Christians involved in inter-religious dialogue

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and learning. In order to understand the religious other, it is essential that people have sound knowledge and understanding of the content of major world religions as a foundation for dialogue. Catholic schools now include learning about the major world religions as part of the Religious Education curriculum, which enables people in later life to engage in inter-religious dialogue in a meaningful and beneficial way.

9.8 Conclusion

Christianity as we know it today has developed in the sense of increasing understanding of the teachings of Jesus and of responding to the needs of the world as part of its mission over centuries. The Church is what it is today because of the traditions of the past; the Church of the future will be made by the people of today under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Each individual has his or her own special role to play in the life of the Church and when any part of the body suffers, the health of the whole body suffers. Therefore, Christians are called to be the best people they possibly can. The Church fulfils its mission through people: people who have faith, hope and love; people who share their talents in the service of others; people who raise their children in the religion of their ancestors; and people who share in the life of the local worshipping community. The Church of the future depends on the people of today.

▲ **Figure 9.17** Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, seat of the Archbishop of Liverpool in the United Kingdom

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End of Strand Activities

Liturgy and Sacraments

1. In the early years of the Church, the Romans persecuted Christians for many reasons, but a significant reason was the Christian belief in the Eucharist. Conduct some research to discover what the Romans believed about the Eucharist.
2. Once you have done this, imagine that you are a young Roman who has accompanied a friend to a Christian Eucharistic celebration with a view to being baptised as a Christian. Write a journal entry detailing what you had heard about Christian Eucharistic celebrations, what you observed and what you now believe about the Eucharist. In the final section of your journal entry, write about your decision to be baptised and how the Roman perceptions of the Eucharist were incorrect.
3. In Chapter 7, the elements of the Seder were presented to you in a text-based list. Use the website Canva to put this information into infographic form. Use the various types of presentation tools to display the 14 elements in a creative and aesthetically appealing way.
4. Rituals and sacraments are very important to religious adherents and need to be treated with respect and dignity. While it may be inappropriate for members of different faith traditions to participate in each other's rituals, there is a lot to be gained by sharing experiences and stories.

   In the spirit of *Nostra Aetate* and knowing the importance of interfaith dialogue, particularly within the Abrahamic traditions, create a ritual for adherents of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Your ritual will focus on the theme of peace. Outline the ritual procedures and the actions to be performed. Write a justification for your proposed ritual.

People of God

'The disciples of Jesus were given a mission to preach the good news to all people, especially the poor and marginalised and to welcome them into community.'

1. Investigate and compile a directory of all the services within your local community that welcome the poor and marginalised. Present these in a pamphlet with contact details.
2. For many people, the contemporary church, which is called 'to welcome and serve one another in the name of Jesus the Christ', needs to break down boundaries and reach out to those in need, rather than wait for them to appear at the doors of the Church.
   a. Select one Catholic outreach organisation that operates within your community and research who they are and what they do.
   b. Consider their 'Mission Statement' and evaluate the extent to which they minister to one another in the name of Jesus the Christ.
   c. Finally, make a recommendation to your school or local parish as to why they should develop or strengthen their partnership with this organisation and justify your position.
3. Create a poster for your school or church that depicts a modern take on the humility of service based on the story of the washing of the feet. (That is, what is required of us to show humility towards others in the 21st century?) Develop a caption that links your example to Jesus and washing the feet of others.
4. Within this section you learned that the word 'catholic' means 'universal' and that the Church is the people of God doing God's work. Some people look at images of St Peter's Basilica in Rome and think that this beautiful building, with its great architecture, is the Church. Throughout time, artists have tried to capture the essence of the Church, while scholars such as Cardinal Avery Dulles have suggested ways of looking at the Church through models. Your task is to re-examine Dulles' models of the Church, choose one lens or aspect of the models and then create an artwork that expresses that aspect.
5. Many schools in your archdiocese follow in the footsteps of a founding religious order, such as those of the Marist Fathers, Sisters of Mercy, Christian Brothers and Sisters of St Joseph. Often schools take up the challenge to be people of God through their work with the disadvantaged, both locally and overseas. Some schools offer their students a program/s of helping people within Australia or overseas such as a program for Year 12 students to work in a village in East Timor, or a program for Year 10 students to visit and work in an Indigenous community in Cape York. Other schools offer programs where students volunteer at a local nursing home.
   a. Choose a program in your school where students can volunteer to assist people. Using Dulles' models, examine the program to see how it is an example of the Church in action.
   b. From your knowledge of the founding tradition of your school, create an overseas program for students to volunteer in a developing community. Choose the destination and then research what can be done to assist the community and the activities that you think student volunteers at your school could do in this community. You may like to focus on a particular year level. Using Dulles' model, design a proposal for your school, outlining why you think this is a good program and why it should be implemented within the school.
6. Catholic Christians around the world rely on the Church to provide guidance in their faith and encouragement in their actions. In past times, when many were illiterate, people relied on images and symbols to provide such messages and many of these were depicted in various art forms.

   Conduct some research and collate a series of at least five images that show how people's actions are represented in art. You should consider ancient catacomb images, architecture and the associated carvings and sculptures, paintings, stained-glass windows, etc. Remember to document your sources of information. What messages do the images convey individually and collectively?
7. Today, public art is not the most popular or accepted medium to depict the various aspect of the Church and encourage Christian action. Your task is to consider the way we can see the Church from a variety of perspectives or lenses.

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With a partner, use the six models or lenses: the People of God or Body of Christ, Institution, Sacrament, Herald of God's Word, Servant and Community of Disciples to create a 'wallpaper' for use on technological devices. Be creative and incorporate the variety of ways these elements can be depicted in a 21st-century context. Write a justification for your package of work.

8 In the section 'People of God', you read about a variety of models that are used to represent the Church. One of these models is Church as Servant, which reminds us we are to look out for the vulnerable and marginalised. In pairs, you are to investigate a contemporary church agency that works for and with the marginalised. Research your chosen organisation, and then compile your information in poster form. The focus of your poster should be on how your organisation works in service to others.

Church History

1 The Catholic Church in the 20th century underwent many changes. These had a significant impact at the local level of the Church and there were many visible signs of the impact of Vatican II.

Your school has been chosen to contribute to a feature in *The Catholic Leader* that highlights the changes in the local church landscape over the past six decades. You are required to work as investigative journalists in teams to uncover and document the changes in your local diocese. You will need to:

a Interview older parishioners who have experienced the changes in the Church to ascertain what they perceived to be the biggest challenges and greatest advantages of Vatican II. You will need to develop a series of questions based on your knowledge of the parish or diocese you are working in.

b Interview your parish priest and inquire about the changes to the Mass. Again, you will need to have done some research to collate meaningful questions based on the priest's relationship with the congregation, language, the celebration of the Eucharist, etc.

c Consider the architecture of the churches in your diocese. Compare and contrast those built pre- and post-Vatican II and create a hypothesis as to why such variations occur. Look for photographic evidence (either take photos yourself or search archives) to support your hypothesis.

d Interview younger members of the congregation. Try to discover what further changes they would like to see in the life of the Church. Conclude whether their suggestions would be supported by the documents and spirit of Vatican II, then present and substantiate your recommendations.

e Finally, bring all of your information together to create a double-page feature for the next publication of the newspaper.

2 The previous century had many decades of war, oppression, the rise and fall of communism, as well as other difficult times for the people of the world. During this century, there were popes who made significant contributions through their words and actions. Choose one of the popes of the past century and, after conducting some research, describe how they made an impact on their time and a change for the betterment of society.

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ND 4 Christian Life

Each religion encourages its followers to live their life according to the beliefs, rituals and customs of the tradition. Catholic Christianity encourages people to have faith and belief in God and it also encourages people to demonstrate through their life and action that the message of God is central to their lives. This section explores three key areas of Christian life: moral formation (how people live out belief in God in their ordinary everyday lives); mission and justice (what they do to care for others and to ensure that all elements of society treat people justly); and prayer and spirituality (the ways believers nurture and develop their spiritual selves in order to live a good Christian life). This chapter addresses the important topic of morality: what is right and what is wrong.

The Curriculum strand, 'Christian Life', encompasses three areas:

- Moral Formation
- Mission and Justice
- Prayer and Spirituality.

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CHAPTER 10

Moral Formation

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Morality in Catholic Christianity is intimately linked with the idea of the dignity of the human person. Central to this understanding is the belief that people are fundamentally good because they are made in the image and likeness of God. Christian morality acknowledges all that God has done for us by entering into a partnership with us and creation. For Catholics, living a moral life means following the Good News of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church.

Christian morality implies freedom and knowledge. As people, we are free to make choices about our actions and the direction of our lives. We are not like other animals, which are ruled only by instinct. In order to exercise our freedom we need knowledge, so we need to seek out information about what is good and bad to assist us to make informed decisions. While studying Christian morality, we will also reflect on the ways people can identify actions and attitudes that demonstrate a good moral life.

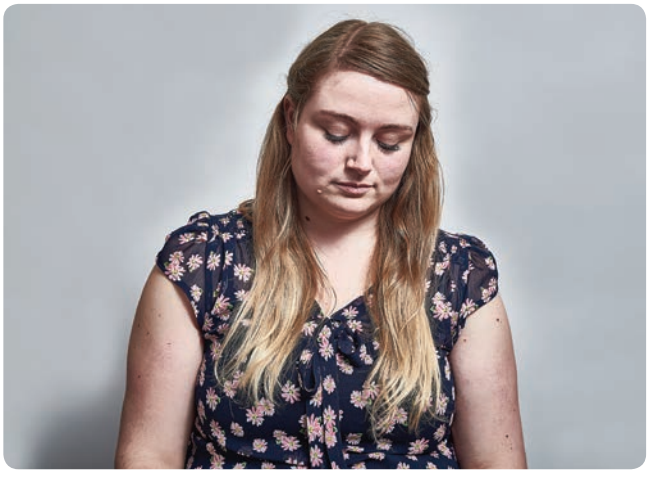
morality
the view of right or wrong

10.1 Catholic Christian Understanding of the Human Person

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred, that the dignity of the human person is the foundation for all moral action and that human dignity is essential for human flourishing. Therefore, all human beings are sacred and social people and have the need to form relationships with others. Strong and loving relationships with God and others support human flourishing. St Irenaeus described it very poetically when he said, 'The glory of God is a human person fully alive'. When we make moral choices, we should contribute to the flourishing of others rather than threaten or undermine their flourishing.

The greatest proof of our freedom is our ability to choose another person's good. Choosing 'for' other people demonstrates genuine love. It means enhancing their well-being. While we exist as individuals, we do so for others: we cannot exist as psychologically healthy people without others. We need friends who care about us and we must also care for them.

10.2 Conscience



▲ **Figure 10.1** Conscience is an essential part of acting morally.

While it may be difficult to locate a precise definition of the word '**conscience**', the concept of conscience is central to any investigation of how people act morally. When ancient people spoke of the process a person went through when making a decision, they often referred to the 'heart'. There are a number of examples throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) where we hear that God probes the hearts of people:

> [20]But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously,
> who try the heart and the mind. (Jeremiah 11:20)

> [10]I the LORD test the mind
> and search the heart,
> to give to all according to their ways,
> according to the fruit of their doings. (Jeremiah 17:10)

> [7]…O that today you would listen to his voice! [8]Do not
> harden your hearts. (Psalm 95:7–8)

> All deeds are right in the sight of the doer,
> but the LORD weighs the heart. (Proverbs 21:2)

The Old Testament constantly refers to the voice of God calling the people to fidelity to the covenant.

While the word 'conscience' is not found in the gospels, the teachings of Jesus emphasise that external actions come from the

conscience
the experience of ourselves as moral agents, as persons responsible for our actions. Decisions are made in light of who we think we are and are called to become.

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ACTIVITY 10.1

In the quotes from the Bible on the previous page, the heart is referenced metaphorically. Copy the table below and explain how the heart is symbolic in each extract, and then discern how this has been applied to right choices or actions to complete it. An example has been provided for you.

Reference	Symbolism	Application
Jeremiah 11:20		
Jeremiah 17:10		
Psalm 95:7–8	The heart has been likened to something that can solidify, such as concrete or stone.	The message in this passage about our consciences is that we should keep our hearts and minds open and not become bitter or nasty.
Proverbs 21:2		

heart and that people need to have right intention for action. The word 'conscience', however, appears a number of times in the letters of Paul. For the New Testament writers, conscience is the awareness of the difference between moral good and evil and how a person's basic outlook on life influences all her/his actions. Making moral choices involves a rigorous assessment of each situation in the light of the teachings of Jesus.

In the Letter to the Romans, we read that the law is written on their hearts to which their conscience bears witness (Romans 2:15). In the Second Letter to the Corinthians we read:

> Indeed, this is our boast, the testimony of our conscience: we have behaved in the world with frankness and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God – and all the more towards you. (2 Corinthians 1:12)

Conscience is also understood as a principle of freedom that is trained and developed by our obligation to our neighbour.

Throughout history, many descriptions of conscience developed: the philosopher Immanuel Kant described it as 'an interior court of justice'; Martin Heidegger described it as the 'call of care'. Many people speak about a person 'having a conscience', but this is really a misleading metaphor. Conscience is not a special power, or a specific action, or even the effect of guilty feelings; rather, the whole of a person is characterised by a need to be authentic, and at the core of a person's consciousness is the need to make responsible decisions in conjunction with reasonable judgement. Rather than speaking about a person 'having a conscience', it is more accurate to say that a person 'is a conscience'.

Conscience can be used to describe levels of experience. For instance, a person uses conscience to think about and reflect on what they 'ought' to do. Conscience is also used to describe a person's knowledge of moral principles and, finally, conscience is a special kind of personal consciousness – the awareness of oneself as a morally responsible person who can be called to account for one's actions by fellow human beings and God. Conscience is, according to theologian Richard McBrien, the radical experience of ourselves as moral agents.

A person's conscience is developed throughout their entire life: it is a gradual process beginning in childhood and continuing until old age. When a child is very young, s/he learns to control behaviour on the basis of reward and punishment – this is not conscience. By the age of six or seven, a child begins to interiorise law and to recognise reasons behind it and the values that it promotes, so they gradually obey rules and laws because it is the right thing to do. It is not simply a process of intellectual development, it also includes growth of the whole person supported by parents, teachers and other adults. Eventually, a person reaches a point of moral maturity where a morally right action is taken because of personal conviction, irrespective of the law.

Conscience is an expression of the whole person and includes how we think and feel, as well as the attitudes we form about all aspects of our life. It reflects a person's values and how they live their life in the light of those values. Our conscience is shaped by who we are and the type of person we choose to be.

When making decisions, we are influenced by a number of internal and external 'voices'. Internal voices can come from our own preferences, memories, motivations or desires. External voices come from family, friends and the media. Conscience, the ability we have as human beings to know what is good and right and to make decisions according to the Word of God, is the capacity of a person to make up their mind themselves regarding what *ought* to be done.

One of the first steps in becoming a good moral person is to investigate your moral integrity. Moral integrity involves not only knowing what is right or wrong, but also doing what is right. Having moral integrity means that you know that it is wrong to steal; it also means making a conscious decision that you will not steal.

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▲ **Figure 10.2** Some people think stealing from large companies is not an immoral action, but a morally responsible person must account for his/her actions and act for the common good.

ACTIVITY 10.2

Read the following scenario and answer the questions that follow.

You are active on your social media site and you notice that a series of images of a student from your class have been posted. The images show the student in the change rooms dressing after sports class. People from your class and other year levels at your school, as well as people not from your school, are posting cruel and hurtful remarks about the student and the images posted online.

1. Outline what you would do in this situation. Explain why.
2. Outline what you should do. Explain why.

10.3 Freedom of Conscience

As people of faith, doing what *ought* to be done is not a burden, but rather an awareness from deep within our personal being that this is what we must do if we are to be true to ourselves as responsible, faith-filled people. Our conscience is at work in this kind of deliberation and when we eventually do what is the morally right thing, we experience the peace and joy of having acted from a good conscience; otherwise, when we do something that goes against our conscience, we feel remorse. Experiencing remorse is an indication that the act of conscience was a *free* act. It is irrational to feel remorse or guilt about an action that was not free or for which a person was not responsible.

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It is important to remember, however, that human freedom is not absolute and may be diminished by ignorance or selfishness. There can be many causes of erroneous judgement and some of these include: misunderstanding conscience; not taking the time and care to properly form our conscience by seeking further information; following the bad example of others; habitually sinning by rejecting the teachings of Jesus and the Church; ignorance of the teachings of Jesus in the gospels; and not acting justly.

Each individual is obliged to follow their conscience and to act according to what s/he believes and understands. Others must respect the sacredness of conscience and people cannot be forced to act against their conscience, but their right to live publicly by the convictions of their conscience is limited by the demands of the common good. A Jehovah's Witness, for example, may refuse a blood transfusion on the grounds that it would violate their conscience, but most authorities would deny them the right to prevent their underage child from having a transfusion if it was needed to save the child's life.

Sometimes, people mistakenly think that freedom of conscience is doing whatever they want to do. This is not freedom but licence, which can lead to anarchy. Slavery, injustice, prejudice, violence, religious and cultural oppression all limit external freedom. In a similar way, internal freedom is limited through ignorance, passions and habits. Ignorance leads to an erroneous conscience. To remain deliberately ignorant is morally wrong. We have a responsibility to be well informed with all the information required prior to making a decision. As Catholic Christians, people have an obligation to keep an open mind, to correct wrong information and to commit themselves to lifelong education in the faith tradition.

Emotions and passions affect people physically, psychologically and spiritually. While emotions are morally neutral, how we handle them is of moral significance. Some emotional actions, such as loud cheering at a sporting event, are neither good nor bad, but yelling racial abuse at a sporting event is a morally harmful action. So too is hitting someone in anger or trying to manipulate someone through emotional blackmail. Habits are normally neutral, but if bad habits become ingrained, such as continually choosing to do wrong, it becomes a vice. For instance, a person who habitually cheats becomes a cheater, and a person who habitually lies becomes a liar. As individuals, we are morally responsible for our bad habits and, therefore, we should try to overcome bad habits before they become ingrained in us and appear natural.

Freedom to follow one's conscience should not blur the fact that there is an obligation to form one's conscience.

▲ **Figure 10.3** We must recognise when we have not acted morally.

10.4 Formation of Conscience

A Christian person's conscience is formed in dialogue with several sources, including personal experiences, family, friends, experts in the field, the teachings of Jesus in scripture and the teachings of the Catholic Church. People usually make decisions out of the beliefs they live by and the habits they form from the principles they have learned throughout their life. The kind of person you become is shaped by the pattern of your behaviour and repeated decisions.

Serious decisions made on the basis of insufficient information, taking decisions lightly or failing to consult appropriate authorities regarding complex decisions can all lead to a badly formed conscience. Also, repeated failure to listen to the call of conscience can blunt a person's sensitivity to values and stifle one's conscience. What this means is that a good conscience has to be developed and formed throughout life. Being sincere is not enough – a conscience needs to be self-critical, aware of bias, selfishness, greed, arrogance and prejudice. It is here that the Greek philosopher Aristotle's famous statement is relevant: 'a rounded moral judgment is ever the work of a virtuous person. When we wish to know what true virtue is, we must look to the virtuous person'.

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Everyone has a duty to form their conscience through education and training. Catholic Christians do this by learning and taking to heart moral law as articulated in the sacred texts of Christianity and the formal teachings of the Catholic Church, examining the reasons, judging the morality of the action to be taken and considering all the facts and guidance that have been given. An informed conscience is about dialogue: dialogue between the person and God, and dialogue with oneself and others.

▲ **Figure 10.4** A conscience is formed throughout the whole of life.

Processes Used in Making Decisions

Many processes have been developed to assist people in making moral decisions. The one most familiar to you from studying moral decision making in previous years is the STOP method. STOP involves:

S – Searching out the facts

T – Thinking about alternatives and consequences

O – Others – asking how my actions will affect others? Have I consulted other people who may be able to assist me?

P – Praying, seeking God's guidance, about the decision I am making.

In this chapter, we will explore some other methods people apply when making moral decisions.

10.5 Ignatian Discernment

Discernment is the habit of being in God's presence. Moral decisions require a person to take some time for discernment. A form of discernment commonly used is that of St Ignatius of Loyola and involves five steps: context, experience, reflection, action and evaluation.

1 *Context*: discernment begins with trying to see the world as it actually is and understanding the conditions under which the discernment takes place. Context has two elements: the factual elements that we can know, and the principles of law, history, culture and theology

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in which one discerns. As Catholics, part of the context of any discernment are the teachings and traditions of the Church.

2 *Experience*: in order for true discernment to occur we need to bring ourselves, with our own experience, into contact with the issue. Moral discernment requires a formed conscience. We bring who we are to the discernment knowing that our personal experience is only one perspective.
3 *Reflection*: while context provides us with general norms and experience offers us a personal encounter with the context, neither of them can give us the answer nor tell us what we should do. Reflection helps us to focus on motives – what is leading me to this decision? What is going on? Am I caught up in my view? Do I recognise the signs of the Spirit of God?
4 *Action*: in Catholicism, discernment must lead to action, so once a decision is reached, a person acts on that decision.
5 *Evaluation*: discernment is a habit, so it is important that we see what happens as a result of the action taken – this educates our experience and shapes our understanding of the context. Evaluation is not just about one's personal thoughts and experience, but also depends upon ongoing dialogue with the community. If we do not want to make the same mistakes over and over, we need to learn from one another and listen to one another with humility and openness and ask: what happened as a consequence of the action?

▲ **Figure 10.5** Evaluating one's actions can lead to better decisions.

The five major steps of the discernment process can be further broken down:

1 Identify the decision to be made or the issue to be resolved. The issue should be about doing or not doing something, and it must be an issue about which you have the right to make the decision. If you have trouble identifying the issue, the following process may assist.
   a List the issues you might be making a decision about in the new few days, weeks or months.
   b List the action you might take regarding these issues.
   c Create a list of pros and cons for each issue or action.
   d Rank the issue and action in order of preference as you currently experience them.
   e Use the issue or action ranked first as the focus of your discernment.
2 Formulate the issue as a proposal. State it as a positive choice and make it as specific as possible (what you will do, where and when).

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3 Pray for the openness to hear the voice of God and for freedom from prejudgement. Some of the obstacles that you may need to overcome might include: projections, superiority or inferiority complexes, materialistic greed or possessiveness, past hurts and self-pity, impatience with yourself or others, desire for control or status. As part of preparation for prayer, read one of the following scripture passages slowly and carefully: Matthew 5:13–16; Luke 18:35–43; Matthew 13:44–46; Mark 10:17–22; 2 Timothy 1:7.

As you read the passage, seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that no self-centred attraction will sidetrack you.

4 Become informed. Find out all the detail relating to the decision: who, what, where, when, how much, why? Make sure you consult with the people who will be affected by the decision – your family, friends or mentors – and seek out their feelings regarding the issue.

5 Pray for God's guidance using the scripture passage selected in step 3. As you pray, ask what alternative will be expressive of your deepest self, your authentic self?

6 List all the reasons for and all the reasons against each alternative in the proposal. Head your lists: Advantages for me; Disadvantages for me. Make sure you list all the reasons you can think of without prejudging their merit.

7 Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages. As you evaluate, try to identify the motives and values behind each item listed. The following questions may assist you in your evaluation.
- Which reasons are the most important? Why?
- What values are preserved or realised by each option?
- Which option more evidently leads to God's service and better serves the growth of your true self in the Holy Spirit?
- Which option seems more consistent with your own faith journey and your relationship with God?

8 Observe the direction of your will while reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages. Eventually, you will become more inclined towards one option and less inclined towards the other. Pray for guidance and, eventually, you will focus on one of the alternatives.

9 Ask God to give you a feeling of consolation about the preferred option. This is the third step of discernment. First, ask the Holy Spirit to transform your thoughts (list advantages and disadvantages). Second, ask the Holy Spirit to transform your desires (your will) as you evaluate the lists of advantages and disadvantages. Invite the Holy Spirit to stir feelings of joy, hope, trust, love and confidence. Such feelings of consolation accompany your desires when they are focused on serving God, others and your true self.

10 Trust in God and make the decision.

11 Confirm the decision.

Another model used for decision making consists of five steps. For each step of the framework, ask the following questions:

1 Recognise the moral issue/s:

How might this decision or situation increase or decrease human flourishing for individuals or groups?

2 Get the facts:
- a What are the relevant facts of the case? What facts are not known? How do I learn more about the situation? Have I accessed scripture, Church tradition and Church teaching? Do I know enough to make a decision?
- b What individuals and groups have an important stake in the outcome? Are some concerns more important than others? Why?
- c What are the options for acting? Have all the relevant people and groups been consulted? Have I identified creative options?

3 Evaluate alternative actions:
- a Which option will produce the most good and do the least harm?
- b Which option treats people respectfully?
- c Which option leads me to act as the sort of person I want to be?

4 Make a decision and test it:
- a Which option best addresses the situation?
- b Have I sought advice?

5 Act and reflect on the outcome:
- a How can my decision be implemented with the greatest respect for human flourishing?
- b How did my decision turn out? What have I learned from this situation?

Recognise the moral issues
Get the facts
Evaluate alternative actions
Make a decision and test it
Act and reflect on the outcome

▲ **Figure 10.6** Five-step process for decision making

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ACTIVITY 10.3

1 Access the links http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7507 and http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7508 and watch the videos.
   a Both of the people in the clips have to make difficult choices. Explain each of these choices.
   b de Veuster and Kolbe found themselves in situations where they had to make extraordinary compromises for the greater good. What message can be taken from their decisions to put others before themselves?

2 Read the following scenario and then respond to the questions posed:

You have a close-knit group of friends at school and you all get along well, trust each other and spend time at each other's homes. One of your friends is hosting a party and has decided to publicise the party on social media. When you arrive, instead of finding a small, quiet gathering, you find a huge party, loud music and people you don't know: your circle of friends from school have decided not to attend. Your friend hosting the party is acting out-of-character, showing off to impress the 'new' friends and being involved in risky behaviour.

▲ **Figure 10.7** Moral discernment requires a formed, and informed, conscience.

You try to take your friend aside and reason that the behaviour is dangerous and inappropriate, but the 'new' friends push you aside and call you unflattering names. Your first instinct is to leave the party, but you feel compelled to stay and be loyal to your friend, but you are torn when you overhear people talking about you being too boring. You remain and stay quietly in the background, enabling you to observe the 'new' friends snapping risqué images of your friend and posting them on social media.

At the party, you realise your friend is not in a state for self-advocacy. You believe you have three possible choices. You could:

- *confront the 'new' friends yourself, demanding they remove the images and stop posting*
- *seek out your friend's parents and have them deal with the situation*
- *leave the party and mention nothing to anyone.*

   a In groups of two or three, assess the pros and cons of each choice and the consequences of each should the action be taken. Record your findings and make a decision as to which choice you will make.
   b Review the scenario again and brainstorm what other options may be available. Record your decision and provide a justification for your choice.
   c The next week at school, your friend who hosted the party asks you not to tell anyone about the party. During lunchtime, people in your class find images of the party on social media and are shocked and confronted by what they see. In one of the images, you are clearly in the background, watching the scenario unfold.

You now find yourself in a difficult situation. The party friend is appalled that you watched on and clearly knew what was happening, yet you did nothing to stop it.

How do you explain your behaviour? In hindsight, what action/s should you have taken?

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▲ **Figure 10.8** Decisions should help human flourishing.

Making moral choices takes into consideration the object of the choice, our intention in making the choice and the circumstances in which the choice is made. It is never right to make an evil choice in the hope of gaining something good.

10.6 Conclusion

A key to living a moral life is developing an informed conscience. Through our conscious decisions we become the people God calls us to be. God created human beings with an intellect and free will. By giving us freedom of choice, God enables us to love. Conscience enables us to recognise what is loving and what is not, what helps humans to flourish and what inhibits flourishing.

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CHAPTER 11

Mission and Justice

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Throughout the centuries, Christians have tried to live their everyday lives according to the words and example of Jesus. The Catholic Church has a rich tradition of formal teachings about justice, which emerged from the strong teachings about justice in the Hebrew Scriptures and the actions and teachings of Jesus in the Christian Scriptures. Developed from sacred texts, the Catholic Church has a long history of teaching about and initiating change for justice and how the principles of justice should be applied in everyday life. This body of teaching is called **Catholic Social Teaching (CST)**.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) teaching about and initiating change for justice and how the principles of justice should be applied in everyday life

11.1 Catholic Social Teaching (CST)

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is grounded in the Bible and developed in the light of experiences of people in many different cultures. When analysing social, political and economic issues in the contemporary world, CST provides a set of key principles that can be used to evaluate situations, policies and approaches used in contemporary society. CST also provides guidelines for action.

CST, the formal teaching on social justice that exists within the Church, was developed through a series of documents beginning with Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (1891) 'Of New Things', which examined working conditions in industrialised countries and insisted on workers' rights, to *Laudato Si'* (2015) 'On Care of Our Common Home', which Pope Francis addressed to 'every person living on this planet'. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis asks all people to pay particular attention to the environment, asking 'What kind of a world do we want to leave to those who come after us?'

Over the past 125 years since CST emerged, a number of key themes or principles have been identified in the documents of CST. Some scholars list 10 principles, while others list six principles. In the shorter list, some principles are grouped together. The 10 principles of CST are:

1 *Human Dignity*: every person is created in God's image and likeness; therefore, each person is valuable and worthy of respect.
2 *The Common Good and Community*: as human beings we are both sacred and social people. We achieve our fulfilment within community; so how society is organised, its economy, law and policy, directly affects human dignity and how individuals are able to grow and flourish within community. While it is very important to love our neighbour, it also requires us to have a broader view of life and to take responsibility to contribute to the good of the whole of society – to contribute to the common good.
3 *Rights and Responsibilities*: the dignity of each person can only be protected if human rights are protected. Every person has the right to life and to those things that are essential to human decency, such as food, shelter, clothing, employment, healthcare and education. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities, which encompass each other, our families and the wider society. A subsection of Rights and Responsibilities is property ownership in modern society.
4 *Option for the Poor and Vulnerable*: a basic test for society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor and vulnerable should be the highest priority for all in society. All public policy decisions should be examined for how they affect the poor. The option for the poor means that one of the first questions asked when decisions are being made is 'How will this affect the poor?' The option for the poor is an essential part of society's effort to achieve the common good, and the common good can only be achieved if the needs of the poor and those on the margins of society are considered.
5 *Participation*: everyone has the right to participate in the economic, political and cultural life of society. It is wrong for a person or group to be excluded unfairly or to be unable to participate in society. The principle of human dignity requires that all people be assured of a minimum level of participation in community.

▲ **Figure 11.1** All workers have the right to fair and equal conditions and wages.

6 *Dignity and Rights of Workers*: the economy must serve people – not the other way round. All workers have the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages and

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to safe working conditions. They also have to the right to organise and join unions.

7 *Stewardship of Creation*: Catholic tradition insists that we show respect for the Creator by stewardship of creation. The goods of the earth are gifts from God and intended for the benefit of everyone. How we treat the environment is a measure of stewardship. We are entrusted with caring for the gifts of creation and preserving them for future generations.

8 *Global Solidarity and Economic Development*: CST proclaims that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers! We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic or religious differences. Authentic development must respect and promote the personal, social, economic and political rights of people and nations. It must avoid the extremes of underdevelopment on the one hand and super-development on the other hand. Solidarity means recognising that we live in an interdependent world: what I do affects others.

9 *Constructive Role for Government and Subsidiarity*: the state must promote human dignity, protect human rights and build the common good. People have the right and responsibility to participate in political institutions so that government can achieve its proper goals. One of the important functions of government is to assist citizens in fulfilling their responsibility to others in society. According to the principle of subsidiarity, decisions should be made at the lowest level possible – a decision that can be made at a local level should not be made at a national level.

10 *Promotion of Peace and Disarmament*: CST promotes peace as a positive and action-oriented concept. Peace is not just the absence of war. Peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent upon right order among human beings. It involves mutual respect between peoples and nations.

Each theme is connected to the other CST themes and together they provide a set of signposts and questions to guide people in the choices they make and how they think and act towards addressing justice in the world.

▲ **Figure 11.2** Peace is not just the absence of war, peace is the fruit of justice.

In this section, we will focus our investigations on CST and the economy, including a just economic order that incorporates the CST themes of participation, economic justice, global solidarity and development, preferential option for the poor and the dignity and rights of workers.

Before we use the lens of CST to examine issues related to economic order, we need to explore some of the CST documents and what they say about the economy, work and development.

11.2 *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labour)

Rerum Novarum, the first CST document, was promulgated by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. Inspired by the work of the Fribourg Union, a Catholic Social Action movement in Germany, as well as requests from Catholic Church leaders in England, Ireland and the United States, *Rerum Novarum* addressed the serious concerns of workers suffering from the effects of rapid industrialisation following the Industrial Revolution in the 1800s. Pope Leo XIII clearly articulated that the Church had a right and duty to speak out on social matters affecting religion and morality (no. 24), to help reconcile and unify classes (nos 25, 33 and 41) and to educate people to act justly (nos 40 and 42).

Rerum Novarum also outlined the rights and duties of workers, including the rights of workers and the poor to

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ACTIVITY 11.1

Go online to locate the document *Rerum Novarum*.

1. Locate and read Section 24.
   a. Explain how the, '. . . true worth and nobility of man (sic) . . .' is linked to the idea of being virtuous.
   b. Describe the rewards of the virtuous.
   c. List those who are identified as being favoured. Provide specific examples.
   d. Describe what is required of the 'well-to-do'.
   e. Identify what you understand to be the ultimate aim of the virtuous.
   f. Provide an example, either through a news item or image, where you identify a contemporary instance of virtue in action. Explain how virtue is demonstrated in your example.
2. Section 25 states 'the blessings of nature and the gifts of grace belong to the whole human race in common, and that from none except the unworthy is withheld the inheritance of the kingdom of Heaven'.
   a. Describe the vision that is being expressed in this quote.
   b. Read Section 33 and identify who is responsible for achieving this vision. Identify what they are required to strive for.
   c. Read Section 41 and explain how the importance of religious observance and a day of rest relates to a united and reconciled existence within society.
   d. In 21st-century Australia, many retail outlets operate seven days per week and many workers are required to work on both Saturday and Sunday. Identify two positive and two negative effects this may have on society. Justify your reasoning with specific examples.
3. Read Sections 40 and 42. Both of these sections refer to the importance of people seeing work in the context of a bigger picture and warn people about neglecting their relationship with God.
   a. What are 'masters' expected to provide for their workers? Explain why these are important requirements.
   b. Identify some specific examples where workers' rights are clearly explained. List any that you believe may not be directly transferred into the 21st century. List any that could be applicable to both time periods. Justify your reasoning.
4. Imagine you have been selected to represent your school at a Vatican Youth Forum. Your group of four has been given the task of creating a one-page document that captures the essence of Sections 24, 25, 33, 40, 41 and 42 of *Rerum Novarum* for a 21st-century Australian audience. Decide what must be retained in the original and what you feel needs to be adapted for your audience. Use contemporary images of workers in society to enhance your document.

▲ **Figure 11.3** Respect between employers and employees is essential if human dignity is to be respected.

private property and to be paid a just day's wage for a just day's work. In return, their duties included working well, not harming the property of the employer and spending their wages wisely. Employers' rights included private property and implementing a just tax system rather than the crushing system that existed in many places. Employers had a duty to treat workers well (not treat them as slaves), to uphold workers' dignity, to allow them to attend religious services and attend to family matters, to refrain from giving them work that was more than they had the physical strength to complete, to pay a just wage and not to interfere with a worker' savings, and to contribute some money to the poor.

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ACTIVITY 11.2

Document study

1 Below are extracts from *Rerum Novarum*. To complete, copy the table, read each extract and rewrite it in your own words. Then list some implications/actions required in the light of the statement.

Rerum Novarum extract	Translation in own words	Implications or actions in the light of the statement
5. It is surely undeniable that, when a man [sic] engages in remunerative labour, the impelling reason and motive of his work is to obtain property, and thereafter to hold it as his very own. … he therefore expressly intends to acquire a right full and real, not only to the remuneration, but also to the disposal of such remuneration, just as he pleases. Thus, if he lives sparingly, saves money, and, for greater security, invests his savings … a working man's little estate thus purchased should be as completely at his full disposal as are the wages he receives for his labour … Socialists, therefore, by endeavouring to transfer the possessions of individuals to the community at large, strike at the interests of every wage-earner, since they would deprive him of the liberty of disposing of his wages, and thereby of all hope and possibility of increasing his resources and of bettering his condition in life.		
33. … The members of the working classes are citizens by nature and by the same right as the rich; they are real parts, living the life which makes up, through the family, the body of the commonwealth; and it need hardly be said that they are in every city very largely in the majority. It would be irrational to neglect one portion of the citizens and favour another, and therefore the public administration must duly and solicitously provide for the welfare and the comfort of the working classes; … Among the many and grave duties of rulers who would do their best for the people, the first and chief is to act with strict justice – with that justice which is called distributive – toward each and every class alike.		
39. When work people have recourse to a strike and become voluntarily idle, it is frequently because the hours of labour are too long, or the work too hard, or because they consider their wages insufficient. … The laws should forestall and prevent such troubles from arising; they should lend their influence and authority to the removal in good time of the causes which lead to conflicts between employers and employed.		
45. Let the working man [sic] and the employer make free agreements, and in particular let them agree freely as to the wages;… wages ought not to be insufficient to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accept harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice.		

continued ➤

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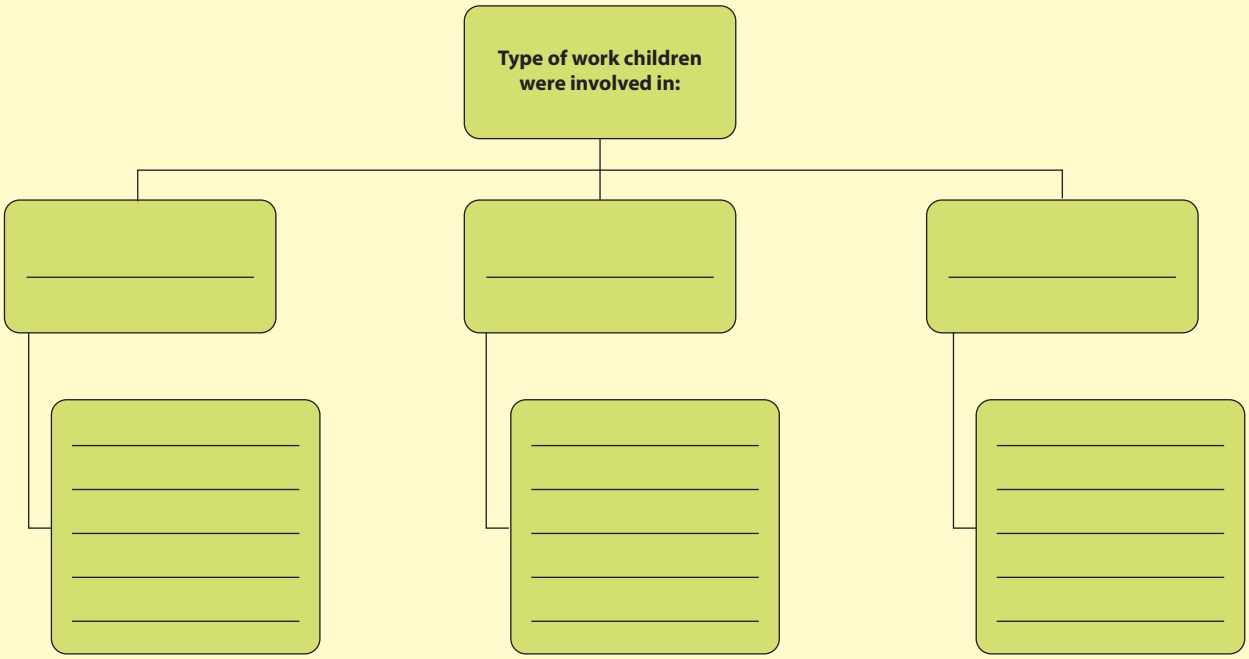
ACTIVITY 11.2 continued

2. The video clip provided via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7510 aims to give voice to the children of the Industrial Revolution. While you are viewing this clip, complete a 3, 2, 1 activity: record three things that shocked you, two things you were reminded of and one thing you found interesting.
3. Watch the video at the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7511.
   a. Identify the various jobs children were required to perform. What does the narrator identify as the predecessor of the Mumbai slums? Why do you believe she included this comparison?
   b. Create a list of positives and negatives associated with the work the children had to perform. All things considered, do you believe the children were worse or better off under this structure? Justify your response with evidence from the video.
4. Via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7512, watch the video that looks at the experience in the United States.
   a. What dates are identified as being the range of time in which such changes were occurring? What were the factors identified as driving this change?
   b. In the United States in 1900, approximately how many children under 16 were estimated to be employed?
   c. What was the impact on the economy? What were the advantages of children remaining in the workforce?
   d. What was the downside of an illiterate nation of children? Explain the link between the end of child labour and compulsory schooling. Do you believe this to be an effective move? Explain your position.
   e. Towards the end of the video, the narrator identifies a number of countries where there are no child labour laws; name three of these.
5. Copy and complete the diagram below by drawing on the information you have gathered from watching the video clips in order to classify the different types of work children were involved in during the Industrial Revolution. Underneath each, list some of the facts associated with such work. What conclusions can you reach about the quality of life faced by many children during the Industrial Revolution?



6. Revisit the document of *Rerum Novarum* and note its publication date of 15 May 1891. Read the opening two paragraphs that provide the justification and context of the document. Explain what you see as the main factors that prompted the Church to enter into the debate about workers' rights.
7. In groups of four, read the article 'Backgrounder: Workers' rights in developing nations' located at the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7513.
   a. Each member of the group is responsible for summarising the key points of their section of the article. After this has been shared, as a group decide what the main message of the article is and write it down in one or two sentences. This can then be shared with the class.
   b. Access the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7514 and watch the video. Create a list of issues that highlight the exploitation of the workers. Describe the overall message of this video.
   c. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast the issues facing workers in the 21st century with the issues that arose from the Industrial Revolution.
8. In a structured paragraph of 200 to 250 words, respond to the following statement: 'Despite the date of its publication in 1891, *Rerum Novarum* is still a contemporary document'. To what extent do you agree with this statement? Provide detailed reasoning to justify your response.

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▲ **Figure 11.4** Working conditions and wages of workers should be fair and just.

11.3 *Quadragesimo anno* (The Reconstruction of the Social Order)

In 1931, on the 40th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* and in the midst of the Great Depression (1929–34), Pope Pius XI issued *Quadragesimo anno* (The Reconstruction of the Social Order). In *Quadragesimo anno*, Pope Pius XI develops and updates four issues raised in *Rerum Novarum*; namely, Church authority, private property, just wages and workers' associations. He reinforces the idea that the Church has a responsibility to address social issues and comments that workers have the right to own private property and should have a right to attain private property. The document also criticises the abuses of both capitalism and communism and calls for society to act for justice in attempting to transform the world situation.

Of particular significance in the document is the focus on property rights, including a twofold aspect of ownership: workers have the right to own private property as well as the state having property that benefits the whole of society (no. 45). Pope Pius XI reminds governments that the state grows rich through the work of people and, therefore, the distribution of wealth should serve the common good of society (no. 53). He reminds business owners and governments that the situation of workers must be improved (no. 59), that rural workers are severely disadvantaged because of the Depression (no. 60) and that the idea of a just wage contract between employers and employees is essential and should not be considered as unjust (no. 64).

Laborem exercens (On Human Work)

In 1981, on the 90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope John Paul II issued *Laborem exercens* (On Human Work), which affirms the dignity of work and its importance in society. He also says that work increases people's human dignity and he continues to support the rights of workers to form unions. For the first time, the Church addresses the

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ACTIVITY 11.3

1. Using a fishbone diagram to record your information, complete some research related to the key components of capitalism and communism.
2. Explain, using evidence, why each of these movements might be seen as an enemy to justice.
3. Go online and find the Australian Government's webpage on the Great Depression, plus the Museum of Sydney's exhibition 'Skint! Making Do in the Great Depression', to create a snapshot/postcard of the causes and impact of the Great Depression on Australian society.
4. Go online and find *Quadragesimo anno*, then locate Sections 45, 53, 59, 60 and 64. Read these sections and copy and complete the table below.

Section no.	Summary of main points	Explanation of how the extract links to the impact of the Great Depression
45		
53		
59		
60		
64		

▲ **Figure 11.5** People with disabilities are entitled to have meaningful work.

issue of meaningful work for people with disabilities and the rights of migrant workers, as well as making a strong statement about underemployment. Underemployment refers to work that is insufficient for the workers' basic financial requirements or to the underutilisation of the worker, such as having a part-time job despite wanting full-time work or where an employee has education, experience or skill beyond the requirements of the job.

At a time when technology was developing at a rapid rate, Pope John Paul II focused on how technology has both positive effects, such as enabling work, but also negative effects when machines replace people.

ACTIVITY 11.4

1. Read the following extracts from *Laborem exercens*. Identify the main issues raised in each extract and copy and complete the summary table provided on the next page.
2. Use the information gathered from the extracts to create a one-page infographic on the main ideas presented in *Laborem exercens*.

Extract A

For this reason, *there must be continued study of the subject of work* and of the subject's living conditions. In order to achieve social justice in the various parts of the world, in the various countries, and in the relationships between them, there is a need for ever new *movements of solidarity* of the workers and *with* the workers. This solidarity must be present whenever it is called for by the social degrading of the subject of work, by exploitation of the workers, and by the growing areas of poverty and even hunger. The Church is firmly committed to this cause, for she considers it her mission, her service, a proof of her fidelity to Christ, so that she can truly be the 'Church of the poor'. And the 'poor' appear under various forms; they appear in various places and at various times; in many cases they appear as a *result of the violation of the dignity of human work*: either because the opportunities for human work are limited as a result of the scourge of unemployment, or because a low value is put on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family. (*Laborem exercens*, no. 8)

Extract B

For when we speak of the obligation of work and of the rights of the worker that correspond to this obligation, we think in the first place of the relationship between *the employer, direct or indirect, and the worker.*

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 11.4 continued

The distinction between the direct and the indirect employer is seen to be very important when one considers both the way in which labour is actually organized and the possibility of the formation of just or unjust relationships in the field of labour. Since *the direct employer is* the person or institution with whom the worker enters directly into a work contract in accordance with definite conditions, we must understand as *the indirect* employer many different factors, other than the direct employer, that exercise a determining influence on the shaping both of the work contract and, consequently, of just or unjust relationships in the field of human labour. (*Laborem exercens*, no. 16)

Extract C

Recently, national communities and international organizations have turned their attention to another question connected with work, one full of implications: the question of disabled people. They too are fully human subjects with corresponding innate, sacred and inviolable rights, and, in spite of the limitations and sufferings affecting their bodies and faculties, they point up more clearly the dignity and greatness of man. Since disabled people are subjects with all their rights, they should be helped to participate in the life of society in all its aspects and at all the levels accessible to their capacities. The disabled person is one of us and participates fully in the same humanity that we possess. It would be radically unworthy of man, and a denial of our common humanity, to admit to the life of the community, and thus admit to work, only those who are fully functional. To do so would be to practise a *serious form of discrimination*, that of the strong and healthy against the weak and sick. Work in the objective sense should be subordinated, in this circumstance too, to the dignity of man, to the subject of work and not to economic advantage. (*Laborem exercens*, no. 22)

Extract D

The most important thing is that the person working away from his native land, whether as a permanent emigrant or as a seasonal worker, should not be *placed at a disadvantage* in comparison with the other workers in that society in the matter of working rights. Emigration in search of work must in no way become an opportunity for financial or social exploitation. As regards the work relationship, the same criteria should be applied to immigrant workers as to all other workers in the society concerned. The value of work should be measured by the same standard and not according to the difference in nationality, religion or race. For even greater reason the *situation of constraint* in which the emigrant may find himself *should not be exploited*. All these circumstances should categorically give way, after special qualifications have of course been taken into consideration, to the fundamental value of work, which is bound up with the dignity of the human person. Once more the fundamental principle must be repeated: the hierarchy of values and the profound meaning of work itself require that capital should be at the service of labour and not labour at the service of capital. (*Laborem exercens*, no. 23)

Extract	Main ideas presented
Extract A (*Laborem exercens*, no. 8)	
Extract B (*Laborem exercens*, no. 16)	
Extract C (*Laborem exercens*, no. 22)	
Extract D (*Laborem exercens*, no. 23)	

11.4 *Economic Justice for All*

In 1986, drawing on the previous social encyclicals, the American Bishops issued a pastoral letter to all Catholics in the United States entitled *Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy*. The bishops wanted to bring people's attention to CST and the US economy. They were also responding to the suffering and despair they saw in the world and wanted to address it through actions for justice rather than just a temporary response through acts of charity.

There are 10 major ideas presented in *Economic Justice for All*:

1 The economy exists for the person, not the person for the economy.
2 All economic life should be shaped by moral principles. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how

▲ **Figure 11.6** The moral measure of the economy is how the poor and vulnerable are treated.

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they protect or undermine the life and dignity of the human person, support the family and serve the common good.

3 A fundamental moral measure of any economy is how the poor and vulnerable are faring.

4 All people have a right to life and to secure the basic necessities of life (e.g. food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, safe environment and economic security).

5 All people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions as well as to organise and join unions or other associations.

6 All people, to the extent they are able, have a corresponding duty to work, a responsibility to provide for the needs of their families and an obligation to contribute to the broader society.

7 In economic life, free markets have both clear advantages and limits; government has essential responsibilities and limitations; voluntary groups have irreplaceable roles, but cannot substitute for the proper working of the market and the just policies of the state.

8 Society has a moral obligation, including governmental action where necessary, to assure opportunity, meet basic human needs and pursue justice in economic life.

9 Workers, owners, managers, stockholders and consumers are moral agents in economic life. By our choices, initiative, creativity and investment, we enhance or diminish economic opportunity, community life and social justice.

10 The global economy has moral dimensions and human consequences. Decisions on investment, trade, aid and development should protect human life and promote human rights, especially for those most in need wherever they might live on this globe.

ACTIVITY 11.5

In groups of four or five, design a poster that visually represents each of the 10 points summarising *Economic Justice for All*.

11.5 *Centesimus annus* (The Hundredth Year)

▲ **Figure 11.7** The Berlin Wall was a physical and ideological divide separating East and West Berlin between 1961 and 1989.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the promulgation of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope John Paul II issued *Centesimus annus* (The Hundredth Year) in 1991 at a time when the world had witnessed the collapse of communism in parts of Eastern Europe, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Gulf War. The document begins with a restatement of the major

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principles articulated in *Rerum Novarum*, but applied to the modern world, and addresses issues such as:

- the debts of poorer countries need to be handled in a way which respects the rights of people to adequate subsistence and progress (no. 35)
- excessive consumerism has damaged the physical and spiritual health of people (no. 36)
- ecological questions and the impact of contemporary lifestyles on natural resources which may damage future generations (no. 37)
- waste from first world nations and its subsequent impact on resources (no. 52)
- democracy should enable people to contribute to society through active participation in society (no. 46)
- society should recognise people's rights to the fullness of life, to work and to establish a family (no. 47)
- a culture of peace needs to promote development and provide the poor with realistic opportunities (no. 52).

Centesimus annus re-emphasised the dignity of work and the dignity of workers as well as reminding people that, as Church, they must defend the weakest in society. Pope John Paul II was particularly concerned about consumerism, saying 'a given culture reveals its overall understanding of life through the choices it makes in production and consumption … it is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards "having" rather than "being", and which wants to have more, not in order to be more but in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end in itself' (no. 36). He also stressed a concrete commitment to solidarity as an antidote to the individualism and selfishness in society.

With these documents as a foundation, we will now apply the teachings embedded in them to practical cases using the CST criteria of participation, economic justice, global solidarity and development, preferential option for the poor and the dignity and rights of workers.

Catholic Social Teaching recommends that issues be investigated using a model of social analysis: one such model is the Pastoral Spiral.

The following questions provide a foundation for your analysis of the issue.

1 *What is happening? Awareness and experience:*
   a What is the current situation?
   b What is happening that we would like to consider more deeply?

2 *Why is it happening? Exploration and analysis:*

In this stage you need to consider the social, cultural, economic, political, environmental and ecclesial factors that influence the situation. These are complex questions that provide a framework for a deeper consideration of the situation.

   a What influence do policy and economics have?
   b What role do cultural values play in the situation?
   c What are the causes of the situation and why?
   d What do the people need or want?
   e What institutions have shaped the situation for better or worse – for example, government, Church, family, community groups and corporations?

3 *What does it mean? Reflection:*

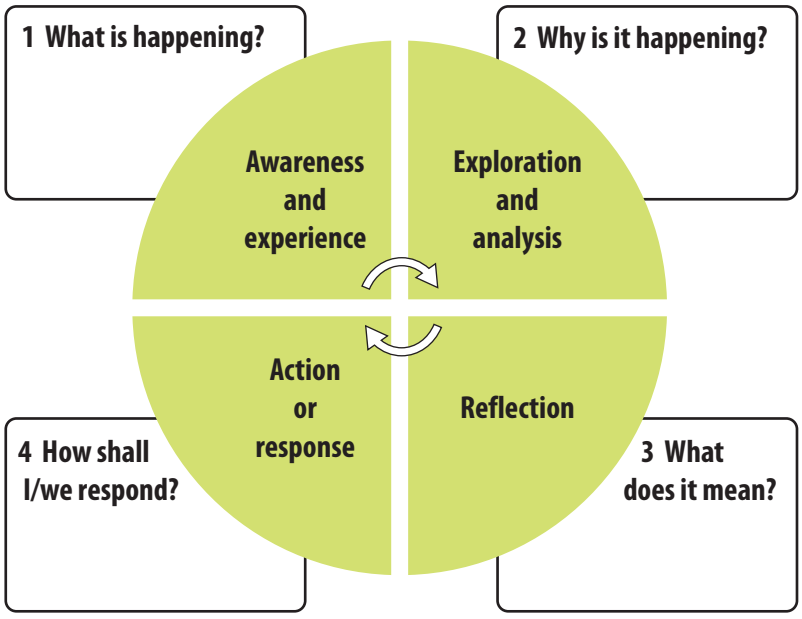
What does the Catholic tradition have to say about the situation?

   a What do we understand from scripture about the situation?
   b What does CST have to say?
   c What light do men and women through Church history bring to the situation?
   d How might God be calling us to respond?

4 *Action or response:*

Identify a possible response to the situation and practical steps that can be taken.

   a What is a realistic goal?
   b What specific steps could I/we take?
   c How can I/we assist people to engage in responding to the situation?



▲ **Figure 11.8** Pastoral Spiral (Pastoral Circle)

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ACTIVITY 11.6

The economy should serve people, not the other way around.

Economic Justice for All

1. Assign groups of three to four students to investigate one of the links in the table below until the whole class is investigating an aspect of CST.
2. Answer each question in the Pastoral Spiral, which requires you to think about the context of a specific issue and any implications beyond its immediate context.
3. Access the links and answer the questions by copying and completing the table below. Identify which CST theme/s you believe are being highlighted in the links:
   - What is happening? Awareness and experience • Why is it happening? Exploration and analysis • What does it mean? Reflection • Action or response.

Follow each of the links below. Identify which CST theme/s you believe are being highlighted in the link.	What is happening? Experience	Why is it happening? Social analysis	What does it mean? Theological reflection	Action or response
http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7518				
http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7519				
http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7520 http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7522				
http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7521				
http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7523				
http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7524				
http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7525				

4. After you have completed the questions in the table, in your small group, consider this: 'What might it look like if the economy served the people, not the other way around?' Create a poster that shows how situations and lives might be transformed if this principle were to be adopted.
5. On 19 May 2016, Pope Francis preached a rather provocative homily related to people who exploit the poor. His remarks are available through the links http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7526 and http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7527.
   Read the reports and then respond to the questions below:
   a. To whom is Pope Francis referring in his opening statement?
   b. What does Pope Francis warn happens to those who exploit others?
   c. What is meant by 'under the table' employment and why do people accept it?
   d. Who is Pope Francis addressing in this homily? Why do you think he is making this a focus when there are more exploitative practices occurring?
   e. Why might it be difficult to do some basic research to discover if there are practices such as this occurring in your neighbourhood? Where might you need to start looking to find out? Create a list of possible sources of information that might lead to answers. Identify if they would be safe or appropriate for you to pursue, and discuss why or why not.
   f. Create a PMI (plus, minus, interesting) investigating the various responses to 'under the table' employment. When you have completed this, ask what people might fit under the 'P' and suggest reasons for this.

11.6 Conclusion

Catholic Social Teaching is a central and essential element of the Catholic Christian tradition. The Hebrew and Christian scriptures call on people to engage in service for those who suffer injustice. By completing an in-depth study of the injustices we see in society, we are able to have a better sense of what systems and structures need to be changed to reform the situation and, ultimately, build the reign of God in the world. By using social analysis, we are able to remove the limitations of our cultural blindness to identify the actions that need to occur so that justice is achieved for all.

▲ **Figure 11.9** A just economy does not exploit the poor.

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CHAPTER 12

Prayer and Spirituality

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Prayer involves talking and listening to God, either as an individual or in community. The word 'prayer' comes from the Latin word *precari*, which means to ask or request. While we might think of prayer as asking God for something, it is more precisely a conversation with God. The act of praying is the recognition of the presence of God in the world. Praying strengthens people's relationship with God and reminds them of the presence of God in their lives and the lives of others. The Church recommends that people pray frequently. There are a variety of ways to pray, including using words, actions, music, silence, nature and symbols. When people pray, they often draw on the rich tradition of scripture as well as the formal prayers of the Catholic Christian tradition.

There are many types of prayers used within the Catholic tradition, some of which are drawn from the Bible. In this section, we will focus on prayers for justice, peace and the environment.

▲ **Figure 12.1** There are many forms of prayer used within the Christian tradition.

12.1 Canticles

It is quite common for texts from the Bible to be used for prayer. In the Gospel of Luke, there are three prayer texts that focus on the theme of justice and are written using a particular literary style called a **canticle**. Canticle, from the Latin word *canticulum*, meaning 'little song', is a prayer, usually based on a biblical text. When the Liturgy of the Hours was formalised, these three canticles – the 'Canticle of Zechariah', the 'Canticle of Mary' and the 'Canticle of Simeon' from Luke's gospel – were included and are sung in the morning or evening.

canticle
a prayer or little song, usually based on a biblical text

Canticle of Zechariah (Benedictus)

In the opening verses of the Gospel of Luke, we read that the aged Zechariah and Elizabeth have no children. An angel appears to Zechariah and tells him that Elizabeth is to have a child and they should name him John. Zechariah questions the angel, not fully believing what he is being told, and as a consequence he is made mute. When the child is eight days old and taken to be circumcised, the neighbours and relatives want to name the baby Zechariah after his father, but his mother insists he be called John. When Zechariah is asked, unable to speak, he writes on a tablet 'his name is John'. Immediately, Zechariah's mouth is opened and he is once again able to speak. In response to this action from God, Zechariah proclaims the following prophecy:

[68]'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.
[69]He has raised up a mighty saviour for us
in the house of his servant David,
[70]as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets
from of old,
[71]that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.
[72]Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,
[73]the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us [74]that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, [75]in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.
[76]And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
[77]to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
[78]By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
[79]to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.' (Luke 1:68–79)

Also called the 'Benedictus', a Latin title which is the opening words 'Blessed be the Lord', the 'Canticle of Zechariah' is prayed each morning during the Liturgy of the Hours.

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Canticle of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis)

The 'Canticle of Simeon' is recorded in Luke 2:29–32. In this section of Luke's gospel, Mary and Joseph take the eight-day-old Jesus to be presented in the Temple and to be circumcised. A wise and devout man named Simeon comes to the Temple and takes Jesus in his arms, saying:

> [29]'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
> according to your word;
> [30]for my eyes have seen your salvation,
> [31]which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
> [32]a light for revelation to the Gentiles
> and for glory to your people Israel.' (Luke 2:29–32)

The 'Canticle of Simeon' is prayed during night prayer, or Compline, as part of the Liturgy of the Hours and the above text is followed by this request:

> Protect us Lord as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in His peace.

▲ **Figure 12.2** Artist's impression of the presentation in the Temple

Canticle of Mary (The Magnificat)

One of the most well-known canticles from the Bible, the 'Canticle of Mary', is found in Luke 1:46–55. Also called 'The Magnificat', after the opening words of the canticle ('My soul magnifies the Lord'), this prayer is Mary's response to the greeting of her cousin Elizabeth. Mary's song of praise is:

> [46]'My soul magnifies the Lord,
> [47]and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
> [48]for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of
> his servant.
> Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
> [49]for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
> and holy is his name.
> [50]His mercy is for those who fear him
> from generation to generation.
> [51]He has shown strength with his arm;
> he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
> [52]He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
> and lifted up the lowly;
> [53]he has filled the hungry with good things,
> and sent the rich away empty.
> [54]He has helped his servant Israel,
> in remembrance of his mercy,
> [55]according to the promise he made to our ancestors
> to Abraham and to his descendants forever.'
> (Luke 1:46–55)

▲ **Figure 12.3** Artist's impression of the visitation of Mary with Elizabeth

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Mary's song is the New Testament song of liberation: liberation that is personal, social, moral and economic. The song praises God's liberating actions on behalf of all marginalised and exploited people in the world. The canticle recalls God's deliverance of Israel throughout history and reminds people how God proclaims good news to the poor and a new social order where the hungry will be fed and political oppressors overthrown. The canticle reminds people that the spiritual life is part of ordinary life and so the mercy of God is 'magnified' now and throughout history. 'The Magnificat' has many allusions to Hannah's song in 1 Samuel 1:11; 2:1–10.

'The Magnificat' is prayed each day during evening prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours. Interpretations of 'The Magnificat' have changed over time. Once people thought that the prayer was about Mary's humility and her low and humble station before God, but in more recent times we have come to see Mary as a prophet who preaches on behalf of the poor. Mary represents the hope of the poor as a woman who has suffered and been vindicated. 'The Magnificat' is not the song of a victim, but rather a song that proclaims liberation with authority.

ACTIVITY 12.1

Study the texts from the Gospel of Luke and the First Book of Samuel and then complete the questions that follow.

Luke 1:46–55

46 'My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
48 for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
50 His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
54 He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.'

1 Samuel 1:11; 2:1–10

1 Samuel 1:11

11 She made this vow: 'O Lord of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a Nazirite until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants, and no razor shall touch his head.'

1 Samuel 2:1–10

1 Hannah prayed and said,
'My heart exults in the Lord;
my strength is exalted in my God.
My mouth derides my enemies,
because I rejoice in my victory.
2 'There is no Holy One like the Lord,
no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.
3 Talk no more so very proudly,
let not arrogance come from your mouth;
for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.
4 The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble gird on strength.
5 Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread,
but those who were hungry are fat with spoil.
The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn.
6 The Lord kills and brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
7 The Lord makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low, he also exalts.
8 He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap,

continued ➤

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ACTIVITY 12.1 continued

Luke 1:46–55	1 Samuel 1:11; 2:1–10
	to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honour. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and on them he has set the world. 9He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness; for not by might does one prevail. 10The Lord! His adversaries shall be shattered; the Most High will thunder in heaven. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king, and exalt the power of his anointed.'

1. List words or phrases that appear in the text on the left (Luke) that indicate liberation and a sense of hope.
2. Now do the same thing again, this time focusing on the text on the right (1 Samuel).
3. What are the similarities between the two texts in relation to giving hope to poor and marginalised people?
4. There are various points in Luke's text that indicate it might be based on the text from Samuel. For example, in the Samuel text, the words

'1Hannah prayed and said, "My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in my God. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in my victory. 2There is no Holy One like the Lord, no one besides you . . ."' are featured in the opening third of the text. In Luke's text, there is a similar, although simpler, statement: '46"My soul magnifies the Lord, 47and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, 48for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant."'

It could be argued that Luke adapted these lines for his own text and purpose. In the table below, identify two other instances where it appears that Luke used elements of the Samuel text to inform his own.

Elements in Samuel	How these appear in Luke

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▲ **Figure 12.4** The 'Canticle of Creation' praises God for all of creation.

Many people have used biblical canticles as a model to create their own canticles of praise: Francis of Assisi wrote a canticle called the 'Canticle of Creation'.

ACTIVITY 12.2

1. Consider the statement: 'Despite Mary's song of liberation being set firmly in the New Testament context, it cannot be fully understood or appreciated without an appreciation of Hannah's story in Samuel.' To what extent do you agree with this? Write a thesis statement and an introduction to an essay that outlines your response to this question.
2. The text of the 'Canticle of Mary' has been set to music by various composers over time, including Mozart and Bach as well as contemporary composers such as John Michael Talbot, John Rutter and David Hass. Search the internet to find John Rutter's version of 'The Magnificat'. Listen to it, and answer the following questions:
   a. Describe the music at the beginning of the recording. What mood is being created? Why do you think it is important to hear this music before any words are sung? Justify your answer with reference to the music.
   b. 'My soul praises the greatness of the Lord' is the opening to the canticle and it is repeated throughout. How does it vary in emotion at different parts of the performance? Why do you think this is the case?
   c. Describe the changes you notice when you hear the words, 'Because He looks favourably on His humble servant'. Explain how this adds meaning to the canticle. What descriptive language can you use to enhance your explanation?
   d. The mood changes to a more humble tone when we hear 'For Look! From now I will be called blessed'. Using your knowledge of the original text and the music you hear, provide a possible reason for the change.
   e. The canticle repeats several phrases. What are they and what is the impact of the repetition?
3. Now, find the modern version titled 'Mary's song', and view it in its entirety. In pairs, choose a contemporary issue related to social or economic injustice. Conduct some research about the issue/s surrounding the injustice, decide who is involved and consider some potential ways forward. Using the same version of 'The Magnificat', create an alternative slide show that creates a storyboard to highlight the injustice you have chosen, and link it in with the lyrics in this version.
4. Search online and watch the David Hass version, 'Magnificat (All That I Am)', and re-watch the version from Question 2. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast the images, lyrics, music and emotion of each interpretation. What conclusion can you draw about the importance of 'The Magnificat'?
5. Find and watch the John Michael Talbot version, 'Holy is His Name'. Analyse its appeal by conducting a PMI (positive, minus, interesting) and use the information you generate to respond to this question: 'To what extent does this version of the canticle appeal to young audiences?'
6. Using the ideas and insights you have gathered from watching, listening to and analysing several interpretations of 'The Magnificat', create your own lyrics to a modern-day hymn. You may use original music or adapt it to the tune of an existing song.

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St Francis of Assisi: Canticle of Creation – Praise of the Creatures

In 1225, St Francis of Assisi composed a canticle entitled *Laudes Creaturarum* or 'Praise of the Creatures'. Francis wrote his canticle in the Italian Umbrian dialect and it is believed to be one of the earliest prayers written in Italian. Francis saw God in everything, especially nature, and in his canticle he addresses creation as 'brother' and 'sister', which is a central theme of Franciscan spirituality: God is the source of all life, God is parent, all creatures are related and interconnected and everything deserves love and respect.

Canticle of Creation

Be praised Good Lord for Brother Sun
who brings us each new day.
Be praised for Sister Moon: white
beauty bright and fair, with wandering
stars she moves through the night.
Be praised my Lord for Brother Wind,
for air and clouds and the skies of every season.
Be praised for Sister Water: humble,
helpful, precious, pure; she cleanses
us in rivers and renews us in rain.
Be praised my Lord for Brother fire:
he purifies and enlightens us.
Be praised my Lord for Mother Earth:
abundant source, all life sustaining;
she feeds us bread and fruit and gives us flowers.
Be praised my Lord for the gift of life;
for changing dusk and dawn; for touch
and scent and song.
Be praised my Lord for those who
pardon one another for love of thee,
and endure sickness and tribulation.
Blessed are they who shall endure it in
peace, for they shall be crowned by Thee.
Be praised Good Lord for sister Death
who welcomes us in loving embrace.
Be praised my Lord for all your
creation serving you joyfully.

ACTIVITY 12.3

1. The theme of a text often emerges as a message or moral. Read the 'Canticle of Creation' again and try to discern the theme. Using full sentences, write what you believe the theme is.
2. Use the presentation application Prezi to construct a visual prayer using the words of the 'Canticle of Creation'. The words should be accompanied by appropriate images of creation in order to make the prayer visually appealing and meaningful.

The 'Canticle of Creation' begins with the Umbrian words '*Laudato si mi signore*'. Pope Francis used these words as the title of his 2016 encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'* (On Care of Our Common Home).

Prayers for Creation

The Catholic tradition invites people to be stewards of creation. As stewards, people recognise that God has given the gifts of creation to all and, therefore, people should use and cultivate these gifts responsibly and share the gifts of creation with others. The Bible contains profound messages about the stewardship of creation and how people need to work together to preserve the environment and protect the poor and marginalised. The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) also pointed out that people work in partnership with God in creation.

Guided by prayer, each Catholic makes a decision to live a Christian way of life as a good steward. Stewardship can take many forms, from volunteering to work on a community project to donating money to causes that assist others, but, more importantly, people are invited to pray and act for justice by exercising their stewardship.

Each year, the Australian Catholic Bishops issue a statement on social justice. The statement explores an issue relevant to Australian society and provides insights into how people might be more involved in resolving issues of justice. As well as action, the social justice statements contain prayers. The following prayer was included in the social justice statement on the environment for 2002.

Creator of the universe
We pray in gratitude and praise.
You were there at the beginning of all things,
Shaping our world and preparing it for us.
You have provided the mountains and the trees,
The waters and the earth.
Help us to be caretakers of your gifts,
protecting the land from abuse
and ready to share with all in need.
Show us how to use our science and technology in
creative non-destructive ways.
Deepen our awareness of our connectedness with all
your creation,
So that future generations will also enjoy every blessing.
Amen. (Michael Gormly SSC)

St Francis of Assisi was not only focused on the environment, he was also concerned with how people lived peacefully with God and others. Another well-known Christian prayer attributed to St Francis is the 'Peace Prayer'.

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▲ **Figure 12.5** People are encouraged to be stewards of creation.

ACTIVITY 12.4

The Federal Minister for the Environment has put out a call to school students to create a multimedia-based prayer for the environment that he can use as part of his website homepage. His specifications are that the prayer be accessible to a wide range of audiences (diverse backgrounds, ages, etc.) and that it encompass text, Australian images and appropriate music/other sounds.

You are to respond to the minister's call by creating an audio-visual prayer using Microsoft PowerPoint, which will allow you to integrate text, pictures and sound.

Make me an instrument of your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is error, the truth;
Where there is doubt, the faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Prayers for Peace

A constant theme of prayer within the Christian tradition has been prayers for peace: prayers for the inner peace of people and prayers for peace between peoples and nations. In 1986, Pope John Paul II organised the first World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, Italy. Over 160 religious leaders representing 32 Christian organisations and 11 religions from across the world came together to pray and fast for peace. This was the first time that religious leaders from various religious traditions had assembled together to pray for peace.

When the people gathered in Assisi, they did not pray the same prayer; rather, they were invited to pray at the same time, but to use prayers from their own religious tradition. Pope John Paul II said, 'Men and women who

▲ **Figure 12.6** Pope Benedict XVI at the World Day of Prayer in Assisi in 2011

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have a religious spirit can in fact be the learners of a new awareness of the whole of humanity in regard to the common responsibility for peace' (October 1987).

Every year since 1986, on 21 September, Christians have gathered with people of various religious traditions to pray for peace. Known as the International Day of Prayer for Peace, 21 September is also marked by the United Nations as a day when people should not only pray for peace but also observe a day of peace and non-violence.

Over the last 30 years, the prayers for peace from various countries have been collated. Below are some examples of peace prayers.

Africa 2010

Lord, rightful advocate of peace.
God of power and mercy, please destroy war,
which results in a spiral of human suffering
and the destruction of your bountiful creation.
Eliminate violence from our midst and wipe away the tears.
Hear the cries of many African people
afflicted through the death of their loved ones.
Hear the sighs of those who live in constant fear,
Hear the cries of many African mothers
who suffer with hunger pains but still break their backs
to feed their families,
Hear the cries of those who have been displaced
and are facing hunger and scarcity.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour we pray.
Amen

Caribbean 2009

Affirmation of faith
We believe that there will not always be darkness
for the people who live in pain and sorrow,
through injustice, marginalization, discrimination or the stigma of HIV/Aids,
because Christ is light.

We believe that people will not always live apart hostile to one another,
separated by hatred or bitterness, by cultural or ideological differences,
by their social or economic situation, by creed, race or sexual orientation,
because Christ is reconciliation.

We believe that the doors will not always be shut to life,
that the walls restricting freedom and dignity will fall down
and that all forms of violence and oppression will be overcome,
because Christ is peace.

We believe that there will not always be tables that are empty while others are laden with food,
because the table of creation is for all,
because the fruits of the earth are for everybody to be fairly shared,
because Christ is the sun of justice.

We believe that water will no longer be polluted,
and that there will be enough so that no one will be thirsty.
We believe that rivers will not be private property and nobody will fence off springs,
and that ice will still be eternal and rain a sacred blessing,
because Christ is pure and transparent.

We believe that one day the wolf will no longer want to kill the lamb
and that the creatures will be able to play without fearing the serpents of abuse,
of deceit, of neglect, of kidnapping, of malnutrition and of indifference,
because Christ entered into creation.

We believe that a free and just earth,
where it is possible to live together in harmony,
where everyone will have space and opportunity,
is not a distant dream but a near reality.
We believe that another world is possible
because Christ has come to the world to make it new.

Philippines 2005

Grant Us Peace
Grant us peace that will
BREAK our silence in the midst of violence
then prophetic voices shall resonate
Grant us peace that will
PULL US DOWN from the steeple of our pride
then we'll learn to wash each other's feet
Grant us peace that will
EMPTY us of hate and intolerance
then we'll turn guns into guitars and sing
Grant us peace that will
SHUT our mouths up when we speak too much
then we'll learn to listen and understand what others are saying
Grant us peace that will
DISTURB us in our apathy then we'll dance together under the sun
Grant us peace that will
BURN our lethargic hearts
then we'll endure burning and let love and justice glow.

Prayer of Pope John Paul II at Hiroshima

To you, Creator of nature and humanity, in truth and beauty I pray:
Hear my voice, for it is the voice of victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations.
Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war.

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Hear my voice when I beg you to instil into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice and the joy of fellowship.
Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country and every period of history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.
Hear my voice, and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice, to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.
O God hear my voice, and grant unto the world your everlasting peace.

Each year, the Catholic Bishops of Australia issue a major statement on Social Justice Sunday – the last Sunday in September. As well as preparing information booklets for people on a significant issue of concern for justice, the bishops also invite people to pray for justice. In 2015, the social justice focus was refugees and asylum seekers and the document was called *For Those Who've Come Across the Seas*. The prayer for justice for refugees and asylum seekers was:

Prayer for Social Justice Sunday

God of mercy, help me to remember:
My ancestors came across the seas!
Help me to keep in mind those who came long ago
and those who now come to our shores.
As I face you in prayer, God of Compassion,
I remember my country's words:
Send them back or Stop the boats.
Then I fear, not your anger but the steady gaze of boundless love
And unlimited compassion
That impel me to hear Jesus' Command:
Love one another, as I have loved you
Or Pope Francis' call to open our hearts
To a universal communion which excludes nothing and no one.
Daring to step into such relationship, I pray
For those forced to leave family, home and all they hold dear;
May they find safe passage and helping hands.
I pray for an end to the wars and oppression that forced them to leave;
I pray that those who welcome them are blessed in abundance.
And with deep humility and a heart hungry for justice,
I pray that we Australians, citizens and leaders,
Open our eyes, our minds and our hearts
That we may see, understand and welcome
Our brothers and sisters.
May our change of heart penetrate to our beginnings
As strangers in this land.
May we allow those we displaced
– The First People of this land – to welcome us.
Then knowing, in humility, what it is to be welcomed,
We will know how to welcome
the strangers who come to our shores.
This we ask in the name of Jesus your Son,
in whom we are no longer strangers.
Amen

▲ **Figure 12.7** Pope John Paul II praying for the victims of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima

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ACTIVITY 12.5

1 Using the Caribbean 2009 'Affirmation of faith', copy and complete the table below. Use the middle column to explain the way Christ is represented in each stanza and find a biblical passage that refers to each representation. Use the right-hand column to display an image or images that highlight what is being prayed for in each stanza.

Prayer	Representation of Christ	Visual representation of stanza
We believe that there will not always be darkness for the people who live in pain and sorrow, through injustice, marginalization, discrimination or the stigma of HIV/Aids, **because Christ is light.**		
We believe that people will not always live apart hostile to one another, separated by hatred or bitterness, by cultural or ideological differences, by their social or economic situation, by creed, race or sexual orientation, **because Christ is reconciliation.**		
We believe that the doors will not always be shut to life, that the walls restricting freedom and dignity will fall down and that all forms of violence and oppression will be overcome, **because Christ is peace.**		
We believe that there will not always be tables that are empty while others are laden with food, because the table of creation is for all, because the fruits of the earth are for everybody to be fairly shared, **because Christ is the sun of justice.**		
We believe that water will no longer be polluted, and that there will be enough so that no one will be thirsty. We believe that rivers will not be private property and nobody will fence off springs, and that ice will still be eternal and rain a sacred blessing, **because Christ is pure and transparent.**		
We believe that one day the wolf will no longer want to kill the lamb and that the creatures will be able to play without fearing the serpents of abuse, of deceit, of neglect, of kidnapping, of malnutrition and of indifference, **because Christ entered into creation.**		

Add a stanza to the prayer so that it incorporates an injustice in the world you feel needs to be included. Use the same format as above and include a biblical reference to Christ as well as a visual depiction.

Prayer	Representation of Christ	Visual representation of stanza

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ACTIVITY 12.5 continued

2 Prayers are conversations with God and are important expressions of our relationship with God. We rely heavily on the words in prayer, but movement and kinaesthetic expression also are an important vehicle for communicating with God.

To commemorate the atrocities that occurred in Hiroshima and pray for peace in the world, your school has been invited to participate in a silent prayer ceremony where students from across the state have created their own physical response to the prayer of Pope John Paul II at Hiroshima. Your task is to work in a small group and create a dance or mime to the prayer. Each member of the group will need to contribute and it will need to be presented into a silent space.

3 Social Justice Sunday is a positive way the Church connects with issues in the broader community and responds to concerns of all people. In 2015, the social justice focus was refugees and asylum seekers and the document was called *For Those Who've Come Across the Seas*. This year, the bishop in your diocese has asked for a strong youth voice to be heard in addressing social justice issues. Your task is to work in a small group and brainstorm what injustice issues you believe to be most prevalent in society. Decide upon an issue you believe deserves to be the focus for this year and research its causes, impact and the consequences to society, as well as ways of responding positively to make a change. Give your proposal a name, similar to the one from 2015, and create a detailed pitch for your bishop. Provide reasons supported by facts, statistics and evidence, link to biblical passages and teachings of Jesus, and create a positive vision for the future. Present your proposal as a multimodal seminar.

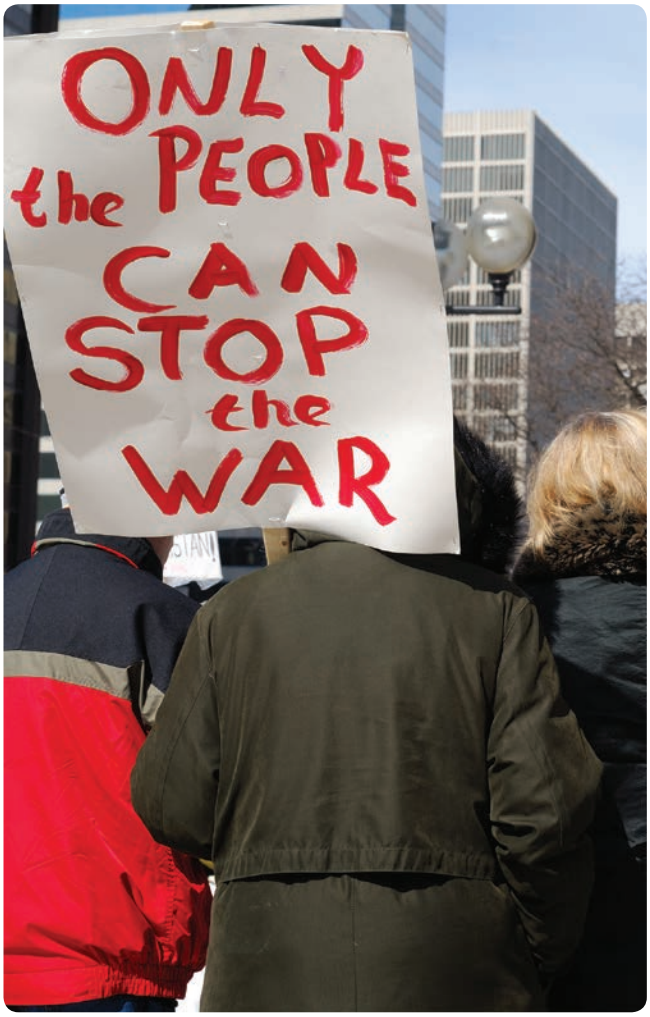
12.2 Peace Activism

Throughout the centuries, there have been many people and groups within the Catholic Church who have worked and prayed for peace. One international organisation, *Pax Christi*, which had very humble beginnings, was founded by a French woman, Marie-Marthe Dortel Claudot. The movement began in 1945 when a small group of people met regularly to pray for peace. They were very concerned that during the Second World War, French Catholics and German Catholics had killed one another, and so the group prayed for forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. The membership of the group increased and by the early 1950s there were *Pax Christi* groups in Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland and Belgium. Today, *Pax Christi* exists in more than 50 countries and is so influential that it has non-governmental status at the United Nations.

One of the initiatives of *Pax Christi* is to invite people to commit to non-violence. Each year, many people take a Vow of Non-violence as their new year's resolution.

The 'Vow of Non-violence', which can be taken as an individual or within a community, is:

> Recognising the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God,
>
> I vow for one year to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount:
>
> 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God … You have learned how it was said, "You must love your neighbour and hate your enemy"; but I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. In this way, you will be daughters and sons of your Creator in heaven.'



▲ **Figure 12.8** People across the world pray and work for peace.

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Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus:

- by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;
- by accepting suffering rather than inflicting it;
- by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;
- by persevering in non-violence of tongue and heart;
- by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live;
- by actively resisting evil and working non-violently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth.

God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfil it.

ACTIVITY 12.6

Your school wants to create a small prayer card that can be distributed to all students and staff for the World Day of Prayer for Peace. Create a card that you can pitch to your principal to be the final design for the one to be handed out within your school. Your card should be prayer-card size (around 4 cm x 6 cm), and include appropriate text and visuals on both sides. You might choose to include an image on one side, and a prayer or other text on the reverse side.

Meditative Prayer

There are a number of ways of praying that are grounded in meditation and contemplation. A modern adaptation of meditative prayer is centering prayer.

Centering Prayer

Centering prayer is a modern interpretation of ancient prayer practices that developed from the Desert Mothers and Fathers, St Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross. Like *Lectio Divina*, it is silent prayer that prepares people to experience the presence of God in their lives. Centering prayer complements and supports other forms of prayer and is one form of prayer that helps people to grow in relationship with God. The focus of the prayer is always the Trinity and it encourages people to rest in God. During the 1970s, three Trappist monks, Fathers Meninger, Pennington and Keating, developed a simple procedure for centering prayer.

1 Locate a quiet place where you will not be disturbed.
2 Sit so that your spine is straight and place your hands on your lap.
3 Close your eyes so that you can focus on God. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within. The word may be Abba, Jesus or Come Lord. The word is not used as a mantra, which is constantly repeated, rather it is a reminder of your intention to remain open to God.
4 Settle silently and introduce the sacred word. If your mind wanders, refocus on your sacred word.
5 Engage with your thoughts for five to 10 minutes.

When your prayer time is over, remain in silence with your eyes closed for a couple of minutes before transitioning back to your active life.

ACTIVITY 12.7

Refer to the Gravity website through the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7531.

1. In the first video link, Phileena Heuertz discusses the importance of *silence, solitude and stillness* in centering prayer. Before you can begin to engage with a centering prayer, you need to be confident that you fully understand what these words mean and what they require of you. Create a poster that explores the capacity of these three words and what they mean in practice. You may wish to use synonyms, definitions and diagrams to assist yourself and others in preparing for a centering prayer.
2. Watch the video again and write three key tips that Heuertz suggests to prepare for centering prayer.
3. Brainstorm a list of possible words that you might offer your class to choose their sacred word from. You may wish to include some symbols or images as well.
4. Watch the second video. Explain what Thomas Keating means by the prayer being about the relationship between the self and God. Why does he see this method as an advantage of building a better relationship with God?
5. God is described as an action within. Explain what your understanding of this is.
6. Why is a positive attitude to distraction important? What does Keating recommend? What does a positive attitude prevent?
7. Take the opportunity to select your own sacred word. Write it on a piece of paper, decorate it and place it somewhere safe and accessible. As a class, take the time to attempt a centering prayer and follow the four steps. Try initially for a short time, say a few minutes, then build up to about 10 minutes over several weeks, six weeks if possible. Share your successes and frustrations with your class or small group and offer suggestions as to how you may become more focused and disciplined.

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12.3 *Lectio Divina* with Nature

▲ **Figure 12.9** *Lectio Divina*, or sacred reading, is prayer based on scripture.

In previous year levels, we have explored the prayer form *Lectio Divina*. *Lectio Divina*, which means 'sacred reading', is an ancient form of prayer that describes a way of reading scripture. Developed by Benedict of Nursia, a 5th-century monk who spent much time praying the scriptures, *Lectio Divina* has four stages. Each stage has a name and a particular focus.

1 *Leggere* (reading): in this initial stage, the scripture passage is read slowly and reflectively so that the reader is able to pay particular attention to the story of the text and the words.
2 *Meditatio* (reflection): during this stage, the person thinks about the chosen text and ponders what God might be saying to us in the text.
3 *Oratio* (response): when participating in this stage, the person tries to leave aside all his/her thinking, thereby enabling God to speak to them.
4 *Contemplatio* (rest): in the final stage the person lets go of all their own ideas, plans and distractions and rests within the Word of God. This is really a deep listening stage as the person listens to God and what insights might emerge from the meditation.

Sometimes people also like to write about their prayer experience in a journal. They might record the word, phrase or image and how it speaks to them about God and their own life.

Through *Lectio Divina*, people learn to listen to God and seek God in silence. *Lectio Divina* can also be used with nature. When praying *Lectio Divina* in nature, find a place outdoors where you are comfortable. Become aware of your surroundings by sitting in silence for a few minutes. Ask God to speak with you through nature. Rather than reading words, read the environment and the beauty of nature around you. The above four stages of *Lectio Divina* can be applied to the text of the natural world.

1 *Lectio*: scan the area until you focus on an element of nature that attracts you, such as a flower, tree or leaf. Move closer to it so that you can see all its detail.
2 *Meditatio*: ponder what you have observed. Study it carefully – be curious about what you see. Use your senses to explore it: what does it sound like? How does it smell? What is its texture? What does it mean in terms of your relationship to God and God's creation? What is God revealing to you in this element of nature? Is there an insight you might glean from this?
3 *Oratio*: respond as you listen to the world around you. Be aware of your feelings and thoughts. What might God be saying to you about the encounter with nature? Enter into dialogue with God, thanking and praising God. Bring your fears, hopes and pain to God and allow God to touch you and the world in which you live.
4 *Contemplatio*: rest in the presence of God after you have placed your needs and problems in God's hands.

12.4 Conclusion

Prayer strengthens a person's relationship with God and helps them to reflect on their own lives and the lives of all people across the world. Prayer habits, like exercise, have to be practised and used on a regular basis. The Church invites people to pray on a daily basis, either by using the formal prayers that have existed within the Church for centuries or by meditating on the words of scripture. By praying, we acknowledge the presence of God with us in the world and we invite God to be part of our lives.

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End of Strand Activities

Moral Formation

1. The 2011 movie, *The Help*, based on the novel of the same title by Kathryn Stockett, is centred on issues of racial injustice, fear and courage in Jackson, Mississippi, in the 1960s. Similarly, *Jasper Jones* by Craig Silvey deals with parallel issues in an Australian context.

   Go online and find the movie trailers for *The Help* and *Jasper Jones*.

   Consider the key characters, Skeeter and Aibileen, in *The Help* and Charlie and Jasper in *Jasper Jones*. Have a discussion based on the following questions:

   a. What do they see in each other that others do not see?
   b. Identify some choices that each character faces that either contribute to the flourishing of the human person or threaten to undermine human flourishing.
   c. How is compassion and empathy demonstrated and highlighted as a sign of courage and how do the characters show this?
   d. Skeeter was encouraged to write about something that 'disturbs her, particularly if it bothers no-one else', while Charlie is focused on becoming a writer and being brave. Aibileen and Jasper wish to survive and live a full life.

   Imagine that Skeeter, Aibileen, Jasper and Charlie's paths cross in the 1970s, some decades after the events that brought them together. All have been asked to speak at a Social Justice Convention focusing on the dignity of the human person with a particular focus on the concept of choosing 'for' others to demonstrate love and enhance well being. Select one of the characters and write a speech that will be delivered to the audience that celebrates the freedom to choose what is right for others.

2. The term 'whistleblower' refers to individuals who step forward and expose some form of wrongdoing or corruption. Sometimes this is to do with their work or the group that they belong to. It can take great courage and moral fortitude to come forward as a whistleblower, but without these individuals doing the right thing some situations of wrongdoing would never be revealed. The following individuals are Australian whistleblowers. Choose one of them, conduct some research and then present this to your class. In your report, give a brief overview of why they are considered a whistleblower. Also, use one of the models of decision making provided in this chapter to analyse what events or decisions may have prompted them to come forward and reveal the wrongdoing. Finish your report with a brief summary of why you think they are a person of moral fortitude.

   Choose from: Toni Hoffman, Avon Hudson, Philip Arantz, Donald Mackay and Alan Parkinson.

Christian Life

1. One of the central tenets in the document *Economic Justice For All* is: 'All economic life should be shaped by moral principles. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how they protect or undermine the life and dignity of the human person, support the family and serve the common good'.

   An economic institution is any company or organisation that deals with money, or the distribution of money, goods or services within an economy.

   a. Choose an economic institution to study as a case study. Research how well this company or organisation meets the three criteria described (protection/undermining of life and dignity of human person, support of family, serving of the common good).
   b. Evaluate the extent to which the company or organisation is successful in terms of incorporating these things into its core business. Provide recommendations in relation to how the company or organisation might improve these elements.
   c. Set out your research using report conventions (headings, subheadings, etc.). A helpful guide can be found at the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7534.

2. There is a famous saying that states 'teach a person to fish and they are never hungry'. The saying is about helping people to be self-sufficient by teaching them skills. In many developing nations, schemes have been developed to help people, especially women, to become financially independent and start small businesses. One such scheme gives a woman a sewing machine or a bag of seeds to sow. Research one of these schemes in a developing country and then evaluate it in terms of 'the economy should serve the people, not the other way round' (*Economic Justice For All*).
3. In the film *The Light Between Oceans* (find the movie trailer online), the central character finds a baby washed up on a remote deserted island, where he and his wife are the lighthouse keepers. The man and his wife are desperate for a child, and have had several miscarriages and failed attempts to expand their family. Apply the model for decision making that involves recognising the moral issues, getting the facts, evaluating alternative actions, making a decision, and acting and reflecting to weigh up whether the man should keep the baby or notify authorities that he has found her.
4. Catholic Social Teaching (CST) applied to *The Hunger Games*.

   The Hunger Games takes place in a nation known as Panem, which consists of a wealthy capital city and 12 surrounding poor districts under the capital's iron rule. As punishment for a previous rebellion against the capital, in which a 13th district was destroyed, one boy and one girl between the ages of 12 and 18 from each district are selected by annual lottery to participate in the Hunger Games, which are violent and deadly.

   The Games are an event in which the participants must survive until only one individual remains. Katniss Everdeen is a girl from the poverty-stricken District 12 who volunteers for the 74th annual Hunger Games in place of her younger sister, Prim. Also selected from District 12 is Peeta Mellark, a baker's son whom Katniss knows from school, and who once gave her bread when she was starving.

   Search online for the movie trailer for *The Hunger Games* and answer the questions below.

   a. The film opens with a glimpse of Katniss in her daily life before she is involved in the games: how would you describe her life? How does she cope with her situation? What values does she seem to have?

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b There are many visual images that provide a contrast between the poverty of Katniss' home region and the extravagance of the capital city. What are some images you have seen that effectively present poverty and others that present extravagant wealth in this country and in others? Why are images effective in helping us contrast the inequalities that result from unjust systems and structures?

c In the film, we see how people's private lives as well as violence are made a spectacle for the 'entertainment' of others. How does this undermine human dignity?

d Does the main character remain true to herself and her ideals? What compromises her in any way?

e CST says that we are social beings. In what ways are the main characters in the film shown to be social beings? How does the film promote individuals over solidarity with others? When is the good of the individual shown to be primary? When is solidarity shown to be important? Which is the most important in the world of the film? Provide evidence to support your claims.

f What are the problems in the society in the film that inhibit the flourishing of the common good? Is there any sense of what the common good might be for all the groups in the film?

g Why does this film and the books related to it have so much appeal to people today? In what way/s does the film have a positive or negative influence on young adults trying to live out a Christian lifestyle?

Prayer and Spirituality

1. You have been asked to speak at the World Day of Prayer for Peace. You need to speak to those assembled about your view of the world (as a Year 10 student) and some of the ways we need to act to help instil greater peace in our societies.

   In order to be an informed speaker, you will need to look into various current issues where peace is lacking, and think about ways in which we all might act for greater peace, both in our local environments as well as globally.

   An example of a good speech by someone your age around similar issues is Severn Cullis-Suzuki's speech delivered to the UN in 1992. View this speech through the link in the interactive textbook, before embarking on your research.

2. As part of the Religious Life of the School, your school's administration team wants to shed greater light on a variety of social justice issues. In doing so, they would like to create a series of posters to act as a visual reminder of such issues around the school.
   a Access the site provided via the link http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/7537 and read through the various prayers focused on social justice.
   b Choose one of these prayers, and create a poster based around the text of the prayer. The text can be formatted in a creative way, and should be accompanied by appropriate visual elements such as pictures and graphics.

3. The 'Peace Prayer' of St Francis of Assisi calls individuals to live in peace with each other and the earth. Re-examine the prayer and then, recalling what you have learned in this section, write your own contemporary version of a peace prayer.

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Glossary

anthropomorphise
to ascribe human qualities or features

apology
an ancient Greek term for a formally written defence of something

bimah
a raised platform where the Torah is read

bodhisattva
enlightened being

canticle
a prayer or little song, usually based on a biblical text

caste
class structure

Catholic Social Teaching (CST)
teaching about and initiating change for justice and how the principles of justice should be applied in everyday life

coadjutor
a bishop who is assigned to assist a diocesan bishop

conscience
the experience of ourselves as moral agents, as persons responsible for our actions. Decisions are made in light of who we think we are and are called to become.

diaspora
people living away from their homeland

dirges
laments or mournful songs/music

doxology
a short hymn of praise to God

ecclesiology
the theological study of the Church

ecumenism
from the Greek word *oikoumene*, meaning the inhabited world. Ecumenism is a movement that seeks to achieve unity of Christians.

Eightfold Path
one of the principal teachings of the Buddha, who describes it as the way leading to the end of suffering and the achievement of self-awakening

enlightenment
gaining insight or wisdom that informs or instructs the individual

epistle
written communication in the form of a letter

Eucharist
literally a 'thanksgiving'. The common name for the Mass or Lord's Supper. Also, the third sacrament in the process of Christian initiation.

evangelisation
the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus through word and witness

fascism
a radical form of authoritarian nationalism that stresses class or racial dominance

Five Pillars
Shahada (Creed); *salat* (prayer); *zakat* (charity); *sawm* (fasting during Ramadan); *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca)

Four Noble Truths
the four key principles of the historical Buddha's teachings

Friday prayer (*jum'a*)
congregational prayer in the mosque

Gentile
a person of non-Jewish faith or ancestry

hadiths
a report of something the Prophet said, did or approved of, or the sum total of these reports

Halakhah
any normative Jewish law, custom, practice or rite

halal
literally 'permitted'; includes all of the *Sharia* (Islamic law) valuations except forbidden; also specifically used for food that may be eaten

Holy See
also referred to as the See of Rome or Apostolic See; the seat of government of the universal church, located in the diocese of Rome

Holy Trinity
the Father or Creator; the Son or Liberator; and the Holy Spirit or Sustainer

iftar
breaking of the fast

immanent
God 'remains in' creation. God is present everywhere by the ongoing acts of creation.

incarnation
in this context, the process by which the Word of God became flesh

karma
the effects of one's actions in life, good or bad; the natural consequences of actions

katcha
poor quality

kosher
ritually correct Jewish dietary practices

laity
members of a religious faith who are not ordained clergy

magisterium
the official and authoritative teaching of the Catholic Church, as carried out by bishops or the Pope

Mahayana
literally the 'great vehicle'

Marxism
an ideology used to form the basis of communism

matzah
Jewish unleavened bread used for Pesach

maya
the Hindu belief that the everyday world is an illusion and that the distinction between the self and the universe is a false dichotomy

mihrab
a niche in the inner wall of a mosque, indicating the direction of Mecca

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minaret
tower connected with a mosque from which the *adhan* (call to worship) is given

minbar
pulpit in the mosque from which the *khutba* (sermon) is given

minyan
a prayer quorum of 10 male Jews over the age of 13

moksha
hindu concept of final liberation from the cycle of reincarnation

morality
the view of right or wrong

mosque
literally 'place of prostration in prayer' where Muslims gather for *salah* and/or communal purposes

muezzin
person who gives the *adhan* or call to worship

murti
image of the deity

nirvana
literally 'blowing out'; in Buddhism the goal of religious practice

polytheistic
belief in many gods

presbyter
an elder or minister of the Christian Church

presider
one who occupies a place of authority

prophets
people who proclaim the message of God

prostrate
to lie face down

puja
Hindu devotional worship often involving the use of a *murti* (image)

pukka
genuine

qibla
the direction of Mecca

Qur'an
literally 'recitation'; the revelations that came from God to Muhammad between 610 and 632; memorising and reciting the Qur'an is one of the most important religious activities for Muslims

sacraments
in general, any visible sign of God's invisible presence. Specifically, a sign through which the Church manifests and celebrates its faith and communicates the saving grace of God. In Catholic doctrine, there are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Marriage, Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick.

sacred
associated with significant religious purpose and value

samsara
the cycle of perpetual flux; a term used to designate the entire cycle of transmigration

Seder
the meal that is celebrated on the first night of Pesach (Passover); from the Hebrew word for 'order'

Shahada
the formula of witness: 'There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the messenger of God', by which a Muslim witnesses to his or her faith and a non-Muslim becomes a Muslim

Shi'ites
believe that leadership succession was hereditary, descending from the family of Muhammad

stupa
bell-shaped constructions that store relics of the dead

Sunnis
group within Islam who follow strict observation of the Qur'an and hadiths

synagogue
the central institution of Jewish communal worship and study; a term used for the place of gathering

synoptic gospels
the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are considered synoptic because of their similarity in content

tallit
a large, four-cornered shawl with fringes and special knots at the extremities, worn during Jewish morning prayers

tefillin
sometimes translated as phylacteries. Box-like appurtenances that accompany prayer, worn by adult males (and now some females) at weekday morning services. The boxes have leather straps attached and contain scriptural excerpts. One box is placed on the head, the other is placed on the left arm, near the heart.

Ten Precepts
fundamental Buddhist values related to ethical and moral teaching

The Three Jewels
the three most precious items in Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (his teaching) and the Sangha (the monastic community)

Theravada
'those who hold the doctrine of the elders'

tradition
beliefs or customs passed down through generations

transcendent
the 'otherness' of God, who is 'above' and 'beyond' the world and human understanding

transubstantiation
the official Catholic teaching, given at the Council of Trent, that the substance of the bread and the wine are changed into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood at the Eucharist

Upanishads
collections of Hindu philosophical writings that are attached to the Vedas but move beyond their emphasis on ritual by seeking the meaning of human existence

Vedas
the four ancient texts that constitute the oldest and most sacred stratum of Hindu sacred writings

yarmulke or **kippah**
a head covering worn by Jewish men for worship, religious study, meals or at any other time

zabihah
Islamic method for slaughtering animals

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